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THE GNOSTICS.

ΔΩΣΩ ΑΥΤΩ ΨΗΦΟΝ ΛΕΥΚΗΝ ΚΑΙ ΕΠΙ ΤΗΝ ΨΗΦΟΝ ΟΝΟΜΑ ΚΑΙΝΟΝ ΓΕΓΡΑΜΜΕΝΟΝ Ο ΟΥΔΕΙΣ ΕΓΝΩ ΕΙ ΜΗ Ο ΛΑΜΒΑΝΩΝ.—
Apoc. ii. 17.

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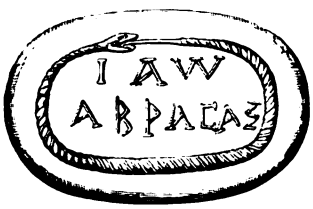
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To face the Title-Page.

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THE GNOSTICS

AND THEIR REMAINS,

ANCIENT AND MEDIÆVAL.

By C. W. KING, M.A.,

FELLOW OF TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE, AUTHOR OF "ANTIQUE GEMS."



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PREFACE.

THAT nothing upon this subject should hitherto have been attempted in the English language, except by Dr. Walsh, seems to me a sufficient excuse for undertaking the same task on a more comprehensive plan. Dr. Walsh's little book is in fact nothing more than a bare epitome of Beausobre, illustrated from the very scanty store of materials at his command, and like his authority, based upon a principle altogether fallacious. Taking for granted, upon the assertion of their opponents, that the several chiefs of the Gnosis were mere heretics, that is, perverters of the Christian doctrines that they had originally embraced as a Divine revelation, he, like his guide, does not trouble himself to trace out the true origin of their theories, but is content with sketching their principal features; whilst in explaining their monuments, he refers all, however really diverse in nature, to one and the same school, and interprets them according to his own ungrounded and preconceived notions of their character. On such a system, neither the doctrines themselves, nor the relics they have left behind in such profusion, are susceptible of even a plausible explanation, much less of one capable of satisfying an inquiring mind. The plan therefore proposed to myself, but which unfortunate circumstances have prevented my fully executing, has been, first to review the grand religious systems of the East flourishing at the time of the establishment of Christianity in those regions, and their necessary influence on

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the modes of thought and expression both of its missionaries and of its first converts; next, by the testimony of the "Apostle to the Gentiles" himself, clearly to establish the existence of all the germs of the Gnosis, in those cities which were the scene of his most important labours.

In my sketch of these systems I have done little more than condense Matter's admirable Introduction to his 'Histoire Critique du Gnosticisme;' but thenceforward I have carried on my investigations according to a theory, in my conviction the only true one, which, although he once alludes approvingly to it, he has entirely neglected to follow out to its necessary consequences. Restricting himself to describing in his lucid and elegant style, the speculations of the respective heresiarchs, and going no further back than the Zend-avesta and the Kabala for the store-houses whence they borrowed their mystic principles, he errs in representing all their systems as novel, and the pure compositions of the teachers themselves.

1. That the seeds of the Gnosis were originally of Indian growth, and carried westward by the influence of that vast Buddhist movement, which in the fifth century before our era had overspread all the East from Thibet to Ceylon, was hinted at by Matter, and became apparent to me on a very slight acquaintance with the fundamental doctrines of Indian theosophy. To shew this, the two systems in their two most perfected forms, that of Valentinus and that of the Nepaulese Buddhists, are briefly described and confronted; and throughout innumerable points of analogy will be found indicated.

In the history of the first four centuries of the Church, everything that was denounced as heretical, may be traced up to Indian speculative philosophy, as its genuine fountain-head; how much that passed current for orthodox, had really flowed

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from the same source, it is neither expedient nor decorous now to inquire.

In order to obtain a clear view of the principal forms of Gnosticism, as well as to escape relying upon second-hand descriptions (in this case more than ever untrustworthy), whilst collecting materials, I began by carefully perusing the vast *Panarion* of Epiphanius: a laborious task, but well repaid by the vivid picture it everywhere presents of the inner state of society under the Lower Empire, and of the war then so fiercely waged between Reason and Faith. This treatise is a connected history of the Gnosis in all its developments during the first three centuries. Its author transcribes Irenæus for the earlier ages; the later part is of the greatest value, being drawn from his personal experience, the writer having in early life joined the Marcosians. After his days, nothing novel sprang up in the field of theological philosophy, so diversified before with the strange and luxuriant weeds or flowers of the Gnosis: the secular combining with the ecclesiastical powers, having made it their duty to crush and to eradicate all such daring and irregular growths of the human mind.

2. After considering the class that owed its birth to India, next in importance for her contributions to the opinions, and vastly more to the monuments before us, comes Egypt with her primæval religion. In its Romanised and latest disguise, its productions are often confounded with the true offspring of the Gnosis. These are discriminated, their distinctive characters pointed out, and ranged under their several heads, according as they were designed for a religious or for a medicinal object.

3. Much space has been devoted to that ingenious figment of the Alexandrian mystic, the *Abraxas Pantheos*, who has

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given his name to the entire class of talismans, many of them long anterior in date to his creation in a visible form, many belonging to ideas totally unconnected with his religion. Of the figure, the personage thereby typified, and the true meaning of his name and different titles, much information has been collected, and much heretofore but little known, presented in a compact form to those curious to learn all that has been satisfactorily established upon these abstruse questions. The *Mithraic* religion, under whose kindly shelter so much of Occidental Christianity grew up unmolested, is next reviewed, and the causes pointed out for this alliance, at first sight so inexplicable. With this are connected the singular affinity between the ceremonial of the two, and the transfer of so much originally Mithraic into the usage of the orthodox; and several curious memorials will be found adduced that bear testimony to this gradual transition.

4. After this review of the several elements which the various chiefs of Gnosticism worked up with so much ingenuity into one consistent whole, incorporating with them such parts of the Christian doctrine as harmonised with the rest, we come better prepared to the consideration of the *symbols* and the *terminology*, whereby their ideas were communicated to those initiated into their arcana: composite figures and *siglæ* "having a voice to the wise, but which the vulgar heareth not."

Astrology justly claims as its own a large proportion of the relics popularly termed Gnostic, for Gnosticism from the beginning had united its own speculations with those of the Magians' national science, and borrowed its machinery as a vehicle for its own peculiar ideas, the Astral Genii, the Decani, and the Myriogeneses; and under this head, also, I have endeavoured to separate the purely astrological from the bor-

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rowed types. Then pour in, with countless multitudes, the true offspring of the Kabala, the long strings of bare legends which betray the handywork of the image-hating dreamers of the Jewish schools of Alexandria and Babylon; spells, even then ascribed to Solomon, that secured the protection and favour

> ——— " of those demons that are found
> In fire, air, flood, or under ground;
> Whose power hath a true consent
> With planet or with element."

5. One object kept in view throughout this treatise, is to show how the productions of the different sources are to be distinguished from each other, a point to which particular attention has been paid in the description of the numerous relics collected in my plates; and thus in some degree to remedy the confusion that reigns at present in the whole department. As Matter treats of the doctrines alone, and only quotes the monuments in illustration of his remarks, and the present essay is designed to be subsidiary to his invaluable treatise, I refer the reader to him for the complete elucidation of the philosophy of the subject, and have given my chief attention to the archæological portion (which is cursorily passed over by him), in which nothing has been done since the publications of Chiflet and of Montfaucon.

6. The Gnosis in its last and greatest manifestation, the composite religion of *Manes*, remains to be considered; its wonderful revival and diffusion in mediæval Europe, and its supposed connection with the downfall of the Templars. The assigned grounds for this event are adduced; although to give any opinion upon their validity is about the most difficult problem in all history. With their scandal and their fate is coupled that most singular fact of modern times, the

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retention by their asserted successors the Freemasons, of so much symbolism unmistakably Gnostic in its origin. For this, however, unfortunately for the lovers of mystery, a very matter-of-fact, but doubtless true cause, can without much research be brought to light; and the solution of the enigma brings irresistibly to mind Æsop's apologue of the fox, and his exclamation after he had summoned up courage to investigate the interior of a certain venerable and awe-inspiring mask. This section is illustrated by all the information that I have been able to glean from various sources, on that curious subject "*Masons' Marks;*" those enigmatical symbols, which yet existing and in common use amongst ourselves, and amongst the Hindoos in their daily religious usages, can be traced backwards through Gnostic employment and Gothic retention, through old Greek and Etruscan art to their first source, and thus attest convincingly what country gave birth to the theosophy that made, in Imperial times, so large a use of the same *siglæ*. To assist inquirers desirous of pursuing this subject further, I have been careful to give references to all the lists of those "marks" that have fallen in my way; and have observed the same rule with regard to other monographs illustrative of the different points discussed in the following pages. In this way the shortcomings of my essay may be supplied; for I am well aware how ill I am equipped for entering on these investigations, except in the point of practical acquaintance with the actual monuments. Nevertheless, it being most true that "dans le pays des aveugles le borgne est roi," there is room for hoping that my attempts (more suggestive than anything else) will prove both novel and interesting.

Related to these in nature are *Talismans* and *Amulets* generally. Their employment, and the superstitions to which

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they owe their origin, are noticed under this head, and the derivation of many of the Mediæval from a Gnostic source is established, whilst the key to some of their Kabalistic legends is supplied by following out this principle; in a way probably more to the purpose than any hitherto suggested.

6. The idea of *Death* has furnished the richest crop of such imagery, the fancy endeavouring to express and familiarize itself to the notion of mortality. Besides its relation to art, this being a subject of universal interest, my collectanea on the head are somewhat extensive, and embrace many points neglected by Lessing in his curious inquiry 'Wie die Alten den Tod gebildet.' The peculiar importance of every relic that can be referred to the primitive ages of Christianity is augmented by their excessive rarity. All the examples produced by the glyptic art in this branch that I have been able to examine are described, and some remarks are offered on the singular permutation of the primary sense in which certain amongst them came to be accepted.

With respect to my illustrations, some doubtless will be surprised at their being drawn almost exclusively from records of such small apparent importance as engraved stones; and think this portion of the work therefore incomplete, and blame the author for not having had recourse to remains of a more public character. But this restriction is, in truth, the necessary result of the nature of the things here treated of. Secret societies, especially that one of which the maxim was, as Clemens tells us, the truly wise one,

"Learn to know all, but keep thyself unknown,"

erect no monuments to attract the public attention; they deal

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in symbols to be privately circulated, in pass-words known only to the illuminati: or else they embody their tenets in mystic drawings like the Ophite Diagramma, and in papyri long since committed to the flames. The non-antiquary will doubtless exclaim against the rudeness of my drawings in the lithographic plates; but in fact, rude as they are, they in most cases flatter their originals, the extreme barbarism of which it was often impossible to reproduce, and yet make the design intelligible. Be it remembered that

"Gratia non habitat, non hoc Cyllenius antro;"

Pallas no longer, as in the elder ages of the art, guided the engraver's hand, but Siva and Bhavani (ill-disguised as Hermes and Isis) suggested his designs; or else the spiteful, monster-imaged genii of the Kabala. The religion of fear, under its various modifications, now reigned supreme, and was fast banishing the beauteous, sensuous, mythology of the old Greek nature-worship, into which nothing that was malignant, or hideous in its nature, was ever admitted. The virtue of the talisman lay in the type it embodied, and in its own material substance; the manner of the execution of the potent sigil was altogether unconsidered.

About half the number are from drawings made by myself of such examples as fell under my notice during the last few years;—the scrupulous fidelity of these may be relied on; afterwards when my own sight no longer availed me, the kindness of the then owner of the originals came to my assistance, and furnished the remainder of the sketches. They in fact were chiefly derived from the extensive and unpublished series comprised in the ancient Praun Collection (formed three centuries ago), and last year unhappily dispersed. An old and valued friend who had recommended

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the reproduction of my collection of outlines, lithographed the first three plates; the superiority of these to the rest is conspicuous. These were the foundation of the present work; for after drawing up the detailed description of their contents, it became necessary to put my numerous collectanea into an available shape to illustrate my explanations, and the grounds on which they were based; and thus by degrees the treatise assumed its present form.

In those rare instances where the beauty of the work of art deserved reproduction by a more skilful hand, I have been indebted to the graver of Mr. R. B. Utting, who has executed the woodcuts with a spirit as well as accuracy that leave nothing to be desired.

C. W. KING.

MICHAELMAS, 1864.

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ERRATA.

In the votive inscription of Alexamenos (p. 90) *dele* **TON**. My notice in the text was taken from a verbal account given to me at the time by a person who had inspected the drawing on its first discovery; hence its deficiency in exactness. But having lately procured the fac-simile, I am now able to complete the details. The deity is, as I was certain from the first, the Gnostic Anubis-Christos: he is *not* crucified, but stands freely on a cippus, and supports, in his outstretched hands, his ancient symbol, the Tau, over which are remains of the sacred **I·X·Θ·Y**, afterwards adapted by the Christians to their own ideas. Compare legend on No. 6. The votary stands at the side of the deity with his hand lifted to his lips, in the usual attitude of worship, *adorando*. He wears the tunic of the vulgar; one of the "tunicatus popellus." The drawing is scratched upon the plaster of a house-front in a narrow street filled up and built over with a part of the Palatium some time under the Lower Empire. It was evidently placed there to protect the inmate, in the same way as was this very deity on the leaden scrolls in the Massini tombs (p. 149).

Page 119, note—*for* "Sebert" *read* "Seffrid buried in Chichester Cathedral, A.D. 1159." Servatius died A.D. 389, but his seal is evidently a work of the tenth or eleventh century, and therefore a valuable example of a mediæval intaglio. It is suspended from a small slab of porphyry traditionally known as the saint's portable altar. The cuts are made from gutta percha impressions kindly communicated to me by Mr. Albert Way, whom I have also to thank for the cast of the Gnostic Gorgon.

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THE GNOSTICS AND THEIR REMAINS,

ANCIENT AND MEDIÆVAL.

GNOSTICISM DEFINED.

THE general name Gnostics is used to designate several sects that sprang up in the Eastern parts of the Roman empire almost simultaneously with the establishment of Christianity; that is to say, these sects then, for the first time, assumed a definite form, and ranged themselves under different teachers, by whose names they became known to the world, although in reality their chief doctrines had been held for centuries before in many of the cities in Asia Minor. There, it is probable, they first came into existence as "Mystæ," upon the establishment of a direct intercourse with India under the Seleucidæ and the Ptolemies. The colleges of Essenes and Megabyzæ at Ephesus, the Orphics of Thrace, the Curetes of Crete are all merely branches of one antique and common religion, and that originally Asiatic.

The word Gnosticism is derived from the Greek, *Gnosis*, knowledge, a term used from the very dawn of philosophy to designate the science of things divine; thus Diogenes Laertius records that Pythagoras termed the transcendental portion of his doctrines Γνωσις των οντων. And later, Gnosis was the name given to what Porphyry calls "the Antique or Oriental

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philosophy," to distinguish it from the Grecian systems. Matter thinks the term was first used, in its technical sense of "superior or celestial knowledge," by the Jewish philosophers belonging to their famous school at Alexandria. These, following the example of a noted Rabbin, Aristobulus, surnamed the Peripatician, endeavoured to prove that all the wisdom of the Greeks was immediately derived from the Hebrew Scriptures, and by their allegorical mode of interpretation, which enabled them to elicit any sense desired from any passage, they sought to establish their theory. Thus they proved that Plato during his sojourn in Egypt had been *their* scholar; and yet further to support his pretensions, Aristobulus forged abundance of poems under the names of Orpheus, Homer, Linus, and Hesiod, strongly impregnated with the principles of Judaism. But his Judaism was a very different thing from the materialistic simplicity of the Pentateuch; it was the elaborate, transcendental system of the Kabala and the Talmud, a creed formed during the Persian domination, and little more than a slightly modified adoption of the Zendavesta.

Ephesus, again, was one of the most important meeting-points of Grecian civilization and Oriental doctrines. With regard to commerce and riches, though it fell short of Alexandria, yet at least it was the rival of Corinth, and far surpassed the latter city in its treasures of religion and science. Its copiousness in theosophic ideas and rites had long been manifested in its famous Diana, that pantheistic figure so conformable to the genius of the farthest East: in the existence of the college of Essenes, dedicated to her service, and of the Megabyzæ, whose Persian origin is declared by their name. Such also was the source of the magic formulæ known everywhere by the term of "Ephesian writings" or spells; and how zealously magic was cultivated there appears from St. Luke's incidental mention of the value[1] of the books burnt by those "who used *curious arts*"— τα περιεργα —(the technical name for sorcery and divination), when converted by the preaching of St. Paul. Such converts, indeed, when the first heat of their zeal had cooled down, were most

[1] 50,000 drachmæ.

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unlikely to resist the temptation of endeavouring to reconcile their ancient far-famed wisdom with the new revelation; or, in short, to follow the same system as already had been invented by the Alexandrian Jews, in their reconcilement of Plato with Moses. "In Ephesus," says Matter, "the notions of the Jewish-Egyptian school, and the semi-Persian speculations of the Kabalists had then recently come to swell the vast conflux of Grecian and Asiatic doctrines, so there is no wonder that teachers should have sprung up there who strove to combine the religion newly preached by the apostle with the ideas there so long established. As early as the year A.D. 58, St. Paul, in his First Epistle to Timothy, conjures him to warn certain persons to abstain from teaching strange doctrine, those myths and interminable genealogies that only bred division. These 'myths and genealogies' apply without any doubt to the theory of the emanation of the Eons-Sephiroth, and to all the traditions respecting the good and bad angels that the Kabalists had adopted from the religion of Zoroaster."

Again, after condemning certain doctrines concerning the necessity of a perfect asceticism, adopted literally from the Essenes, the Apostle adds: "Keep safe the precious charge intrusted to thee, avoiding profane novelties and the *antitheses* of the knowledge (Gnosis) falsely so called, *of which some making profession*[1] have gone astray from the faith of Christ." It was certainly not the mere fables by which the new converts sought to enrich and complete the Christian doctrine—such as we still have samples of in the childish, though pious fictions of the apocryphal gospels; such were assuredly not the false knowledge that set itself up against the "true knowledge," or revelation itself, as something superior to this revelation; but it was a doctrine professing to make a *science* out of the Christian faith, and that a science founding its principles upon *antitheses*. What are these antitheses (literally, oppositions) but the principles of the Zendavesta and Kabala, concerning the two empires of Light and of Darkness, the two great classes of intelligences, the good and the evil spirits, and the perpetual contest going on

[1] That is, styling themselves γνωστικοι.

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between them? Now these antitheses, or the principle of dualism, it is that forms the most conspicuous feature of Gnosticism; and in the Apostle's words, we trace one of the most obvious ways in which such doctrines were communicated, and how they insinuated themselves into the infant Church.

The ancient commentators, Theodoret and Chrysostom, who were thoroughly conversant with the Gnosticism of their own times, apply these warnings of St. Paul to the actual precursor of Gnosticism—his indefatigable rival, Simon Magus himself—whose singular tenets had by that time been widely diffused throughout Asia Minor.

So deeply rooted were such speculations in the minds of many Ephesians that the Apostle, in his Second Epistle to Timothy, written six years later, returns perpetually to the subject, whilst in his Epistle to the Ephesian Church, he entreats the flock not to be seduced by vain discourses (the myths above named),[1] nor by human doctrines, having no more solidity in themselves than the wind, of which no one knoweth whence it cometh or whither it goeth. He even uses the very terms of Gnosticism, as when he says, "Ye were dead in error and in sins; ye walked according to the Æon of this world, according to the *archon*[2] that has the domination of the air." Here we have the Devs and Klippoths of Zoroaster and the Kabala, whose hosts fill the air, deceive mankind, blind their understandings, and lead them into temptation. Again, where he adds, "We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against the dominations, the powers, the lords of darkness, the mischievousness of spirits in the upper regions"—all these are terms of Gnosticism and originated in the notions of the Kabalistic theology.

The later Gnosticism is in fact, as Chiflet has well expressed it, the spirit of Asiatic antiquity endeavouring to usurp the empire over the human soul by insinuating itself into the Christian Church. In its primitive form it had already to a great extent supplanted, by spiritualising, the beautiful materialism of the early

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[1] One reading would make the term "new-coined appellations" an expression yet more applicable to the actual Gnostic nomenclature.

[2] The Demiurgus, Ildabaoth.

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Greek and Italian mythology. The unity, aided by its greater simplicity, of Catholicism, in the end triumphed over the conflicting Gnostic creeds, which, as a professed religion, became extinct in the sixth century as far as Europe is concerned, and whose relics in Asia were at the same time covered over with an impenetrable veil by the sudden deluge of Mahometanism. Nevertheless, even in the former regions of its dominion it was not to be eradicated without leaving behind it deep traces easy to be recognized in the writings and symbols of the magicians, astrologers, and seekers after the Philosophers' Stone in the Middle Ages.

The Christian writers, who have treated upon the origin and nature of these doctrines, were (Origen excepted) ignorant ecclesiastics, who could discern nothing in any religion beyond its outside forms, which they construed in the worst possible sense, ever seeking for the most unfavourable interpretation of which such outward appearances were susceptible. Epiphanius, the author of the most detailed account of the Gnostics extant, the "Panarion,"[1] was of Jewish extraction, and perpetually exhibits in his explanations that incapacity for logical reasoning which so markedly distinguishes every writer belonging to his nation. One rule always observed by the historians of Gnosticism is to represent it as a mere offshoot and corruption of Christianity, invented, usually out of disappointed ambition, by apostates from the religion as established in various churches by the apostles: a representation than which nothing can be more false. For its earliest forms, such as manifested in the doctrines of Basilides, merely added upon a most ancient foundation such portions of the new doctrine as were capable of being assimilated and combined therewith; whilst by the machinery of the old they sought to explain the mysteries of the new faith; and such were probably the systems of Simon Magus and Cerinthus. Basilides indeed, to judge from the account left by his contemporary, Clemens, appears never to have been a Christian at all,[2] but to

[1] Written shortly before the year 400. It is a huge folio, and of the highest interest as a picture of the struggles of the human mind to devise a religion that shall satisfactorily solve all the problems concerning man's other nature.

[2] Tertullian calls him a Platonist.

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have superadded upon the esoteric doctrines of the Egyptian priesthood the more recent notions of Buddhism, the true source of many of the primary Gnostic ideas. The introduction of Buddhism into Egypt and Palestine affords the only true solution of innumerable difficulties in the history of religion; and the facts connected with it shall be discussed in another chapter.

But to return to the popular account of the rise and grand features of the Gnostic heresy. Simon Magus and his disciple Cerinthus are represented by the Fathers as its actual founders. Menander was Simon's successor; Basilides in Alexandria; who, dying A.D. 133, was succeeded by Valentinus, a man of Jewish parentage, but born and educated in that city, and whom Irenæus styles the chief of the Gnostics, on account of the importance and the wide diffusion of his doctrines in the following century. In Syria other sects were founded contemporaneously with these, taking their name from Marcion and Bardesanes, both of whom universal tradition represents as Persians by origin, and therefore Magians in religion. It is needless to mention the numerous other founders of sects less important, until we come to the uprising of Manes, author of the most daring and most permanent theosophy of all, and which fought, twice over, so long and obstinate a battle with Catholicism. This sect, its origin and tenets, from the great importance of their nature and their consequences, shall be considered more fully in another chapter; as shall also the Ophites, whose name figures so largely in the church-history of the third century.

What has been mentioned above as to the countries producing the founders of all these doctrines, either Egypt or Persia, leads us to expect one common principle to pervade the systems of all, and such proves actually the case. The fundamental doctrine held in common by all the chiefs of the Gnosis was, that the visible creation was not the work of the Supreme Deity, but of the Demiurgus, a simple emanation, and several degrees removed from the Godhead. To the latter, indeed, styled by them "the Unknown Father," they attributed the creation of the intellectual world, the Intelligences Æons and Angels; whilst to the Demiurgus they referred merely the creation of the world of matter,

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subject to imperfection from its very nature. But in order fully to understand the true principles of their doctrines, it is absolutely necessary to possess the main features of the two religions whence they drew the materials for constructing these systems: viz., the Zendavesta, and its modification found in the Kabala, and those of the reformed Brahminical religion, as taught by the Buddhist missionaries.

Although to express their ideas visibly upon their monuments, the consideration of which is the proper object of this treatise, they borrowed the gods and symbols of the ancient Egyptian mythology, most strikingly in the case of the Agathodæmon and of the sun-god Jao; yet such symbols were employed in a new sense, if indeed their esoteric meaning had not actually been consistent with the newly-revived Hindoo doctrine, from their very first acceptation.

THE ZENDAVESTA.[1]

The Supreme Being is called "Boundless Time" (Zeruane Akrene), because to him no beginning can be assigned: he is so surrounded by his own glory, and so far exalted above all human intelligence, that he can only be the object of silent veneration. The beginning of Creation was made by means of emanations. The first emanation of the Eternal One was Light, whence issued Ormuzd, the King of Light. Ormuzd is styled the First-born of Boundless Time, and his Ferouer, or pre-existing soul, type, or Idea in the Platonic language, had existed from all eternity within the primitive light. By means of his *Word*, Ormuzd created the pure World, of which he is the preserver and the judge. Next, he created, in his own image, the six Amshaspands, who stand about his throne, and are his agents with the lower spirits and with mankind, whose prayers they offer up to him, and to whom they serve for models of perfection.

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[1] Zendavesta, or the "Living Word" are the revelations of Zoroaster, who preached the religion under Darius Hystaspes. In its present form it was collected by Ardesher, the founder of the Sassanian dynasty, from oral tradition, when he re-established the ancient Persian religion.

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These Amshaspands, of whom Ormuzd is the first, thus making up the seven, are of both sexes; and the Gnostics and the Kabalists adopted them, as we shall see further on, into their own systems, with such a distinction.

The next series of emanations were the Izeds, twenty-eight in number, of whom Mithras is the chief. Like the superior order, they watch over the purity and the happiness of the world of which they are the genii and guardians.

The third series, the Ferouers, are in number infinite. They are the thoughts or ideas conceived in Ormuzd's mind before he proceeded to the creation of things. They are the protectors of mankind during their mortal life, and will purify their souls on the day of the resurrection.

The creation of these chiefs and angelic hosts had become necessary. *Ahriman*, the second born of the Eternal One, like Ormuzd, an emanation from the Primal Light, and equally pure, but ambitious and full of pride, had become jealous of the first-born. Therefore, the Supreme Being condemned him to inhabit for twelve thousand years the space that is illumined by no ray of light—the black empire of darkness. This interval will suffice to decide the struggle between light and darkness, between good and evil. Ahriman, to oppose his rival, created also three series of evil spirits, corresponding in number, and antagonistic in office to each one of the good, and like them, male and female. The first series is that of the Arch-Devs, chained each to his respective planet, and whose head is Ash-Mogh, the "two-footed serpent of lies." These Devs are the authors of all evil, both material and moral, throughout the universe.

Ormuzd, after a reign of three thousand years, then created the material world in six periods: creating first, light—a faint image of the light-celestial, then water, earth, plants, beasts, and lastly—Man. Ahriman had concurred in the creation of earth and water; for darkness being already inherent in these elements, Ormuzd was unable to exclude its nature.

Ormuzd had produced by his word a being, the type and source of universal life for all creation; this being was named *Life*, or the *Bull*, the same word standing for both in Zend. This creature Ahriman contrived to destroy; but out of its

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scattered seed Ormuzd, by the agency of the Amshaspand Sapandomad, or Wisdom, formed the first human pair—Meschia and Meschiane. This couple Ahriman, by a bribe of fruits and milk, succeeded in corrupting; having first gained over the female. Then, to all the good animals made by Ormuzd, he opposed by his creation as many mischievous and venemous. The struggle still goes on: the power of Darkness often is the superior; but the pure souls are assisted and defended by the good genii, and will ultimately triumph. For, when things seem at their worst, and evil all-powerful in the creation, three prophets shall appear and restore the lost light. One of these, Sosiosch, shall regenerate the world and restore it to its pristine excellence.[1] Then comes the general resurrection, when the good shall immediately enter into this happy abode—the regenerated earth; and Ahriman, and his angels, and the wicked, be purified by immersion in a lake of molten metal, so as to render them fitting members of the new kingdom. Henceforward all will enjoy unchangeable happiness, and headed by Sosiosch, ever sing the praises of the Eternal One.

This religion of Zoroaster was a reformed version of the ancient doctrines held by the inhabitants of Eritene; it was the established religion of the Persians when they conquered Assyria, and, to a great extent, it superseded the material idolatry of the Babylonians, whose gods Darius and Xerxes accordingly melted down without any scruple. Matter thinks that the College of Magi, established long before the conquest at Babylon, accepted the new religion upon the change of masters; retaining nothing of the old but what related to astrology and divination. And this is more than probable, for we find Daniel accepting (though so abhorrent of image-worship), without scruple, his appointment as chief Magus, and the Magi, as a matter of course, attending the iconoclastic Persian kings in all their campaigns. It must be remembered how large a portion of the Jewish nation remained in Assyria, only two tribes, Judah and Levi, being sent back to Jerusalem by Cyrus; and Babylon long

[1] Hence the belief of the Jews "that Elias shall first come, and restore all things."

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continued the seat of a most flourishing Rabbinical school: whilst Jerusalem itself, until Alexander's Conquest, was a Persian city. How important a part of the Persian population, at a much later period, were Jews, or connected with them, appears from the incidental mention by Josephus, that the people of the Jews were encouraged to face all extremities in their final struggle against the Romans, by the "expectation of aid from their brethren beyond the Euphrates." Three centuries later, Ammian notes that Julian's invading army came upon a city entirely inhabited by Jews, in the centre of Persia.[1] Hence it is easy to perceive how much of the Zoroastrian element pervaded the Jewish religion at the time of the promulgation of Christianity, when its principal teachers were the Pharisees, or "Interpreters;" if, indeed, these doctors did not actually take their appellation from the word, *Pharsi* or Persian. These doctrines, as then taught, are set forth in the Kabala, or "Traditions," so called from *Kabal*, to "receive."

THE KABALA.

The origin of the Kabala has been placed by some authors later than that of Christianity; and, indeed, it is not impossible that its doctrines may have received some developments after that epoch; but their elements go back to a much more remote antiquity. The Book of Daniel bears the most evident traces of it, and to the attestation of this record are added other proofs no less convincing. The idea of Emanation is, so to speak, the soul, the essential element of the Kabala; it is likewise, as we have seen, the essential character of Zoroastrism; we must

[1] After the Captivity, the principal literary establishments of the Jews appear to have belonged to Central Asia: the schools of Nahaidea, of Sora, of Pumbiditha, were at least as famous as the contemporaneous schools in Palestine (Jos. Ant. xviii. 12). The latter even appear to have paid a sort of deference to the learning of the former; the Chaldee version of the Pentateuch, made by Onkelos, of Babylon, was accepted as authoritative by all the Jews in Palestine; and the rabbi Hillel, coming from that capital to Jerusalem, was received by the doctors of the holy city as a member of the same national school shortly before the birth of Christ.

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therefore consider that it was through their very intimate connection with Persia that the Jews imbibed this idea.

According to the Kabala, as according to the Zoroastrian system, all that exists has emanated from the source of the Infinite Light.

Before all things, existed the Primal Being, "the Ancient of Days," the eternal King of Light.

This King of Light is the *All:* he is the real cause of all existence; he is the infinite (Ensoph); he alone is *He*, there is in him no *Thou*, but he cannot be known, he is a "closed eye."

The universe is the revelation of the King of Light, and only subsists in him. His qualities are manifested in it variously modified and in various degrees: it is, therefore, his holy splendour, as it were his mantle, wherewith he must be clad in silence. All is an emanation from this being: the nearer, therefore, any approaches him the more perfect is it, and becomes less so as it recedes. This idea of gradation is eminently Persian. Before the creation of the worlds, the Primal Light filled all, so that there was no void at all; but when the Supreme Being, residing within this light, resolved to display and to manifest his perfections in the worlds, he retired within himself and formed around him a void space. Into this void he let fall his first emanation, a ray of light which is the cause and principle of all existence, uniting in itself the generative and conceptive force, being both father and mother in the sublimest sense, pervading all, and without which nothing can for an instant subsist.

From this double force, designated by the two first letters of the name Jehovah, emanated the first-born of God, the *Tikkun*, the universal Form or Idea, and the general container of all beings, united with the Infinite by means of the primal ray. He is the creator, preserver, and prime animator of the world. He is the light of light, possessing the three primitive forces of the divinity; the light, the spirit, and the life. Inasmuch as he has received what he gives, the light and the life, he is considered as equally a generative and a conceptive principle; as the primitive man (Adam Kadmon); and as man is called the "little

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world," or Microcosm, this Being is justly styled the "great world," or Macrocosm.

In this Adam Kadmon, this principle of light and of life, the Kabbalists have united the attributes of Ormuzd and of Kaiomorts, the same principles amongst the Persians.

Adam Kadmon has manifested himself in ten emanations, which are not indeed actual beings, but sources of life, vessels of almighty power, types of the creation. They are the Crown, Wisdom, Prudence, Magnificence, Severity, Beauty, Victory, Glory, Foundation, Empire. To Wisdom they give the title Jeh; to Prudence, Jehovah; to Magnificence, El; to Severity, Elohim; to Victory and Glory, Zaboath; to Empire, Adonai. These are all attributes of the Supreme Being, displayed in his works, by which alone it is possible for the human mind to conceive him. To these emanations the Kabalists gave other titles, which continually present themselves in the Gnostic systems. The Crown (Parmenides also gave the name of Στεφανος to the Supreme Being) takes the synonym of *Or*, Light: *Our*, likewise, is a genius in Sabeism. Wisdom is called *Nous* and Logos; and becomes the Gnostic Sophia. She takes also the names of Fear, Depth of Thought, Eden, according to the passions that actuate her. Prudence is the "River flowing out of Paradise, the source of the oil of unction." Magnificence has for symbol a lion's head; Severity, a red and black fire; Beauty, the colours green and yellow (still such favourites with the Jewish women) —Beauty's emblem is an illuminating mirror, and its title Husband of the Church; Victory is Jehovah Zabaoth, its symbol the right column, the Pillar *Jachin;* Glory is the left column, the Pillar *Boaz*, called, too, the Old Serpent, entitled also Cherubim and Seraphim, and corresponds with the genus Ophis in the later systems. These two pillars figure largely amongst the symbols of all the secret societies of modern times, and naturally so, for these illuminati have borrowed, without understanding it, the phraseology of the Kabalists and the Valentinians. Foundation is the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, Noah, Solomon, the Messiah; all terms expressing the eternal alliance subsisting between the Supreme Being and all that emanates from him, and in virtue of which he brings back into himself

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the souls that have lost their original purity. Empire is the consuming fire, the wife, the Church; all names to be found employed in the Valentinian scheme.

The relations of the Sephiroth, or Æons, to one another the Kabalists represent by a number of circles intersecting in a mysterious manner *ad infinitum*, or else by the figure of a *man*, or a tree, formed out of such circles. This figure of the Man, Seir Anpin, consists of 243 numbers, the numerical value of the letters in the name *Abram*, signifying the different orders in the celestial hierarchy. The original idea was apparently taken from the Hindoo figure of Brahma and the various castes typified by the several parts of his body: in fact, the names Abram and Brahma are equivalent in numerical value.

The ten Sephiroth served as types for the creation; from them emanated the four worlds, Aziluth, Briah, Jezirah, and Asiah, each world successively proceeding out of that above it, but each lower one enveloping its superior. A theory this similar to Plato's concerning the arrangement of the spheres, described in his vision of Er.[1]

These worlds become less pure as they descend in the scale, the lowest of all being the material world. But nothing is purely material, all subsists through God, the ray of his light penetrating through creation, which is the life of life, therefore *all is God*. This universal All is divided into thirty-two *gates*, the Elements or Energies whence all beings are formed. The world, *Aziluth*, is inhabited by the Parzupheim, the purest emanations of the Deity, having nothing material in their composition. *Briah* is inhabited by an inferior order, the servants to Aziluth, but still immaterial beings. Yet lower are the inhabitants of *Jezirah*, of whom are the Cherubim and Seraphim, the Elohim and Beneh Elohim. But *Asiah* is peopled by gross, material existences of both sexes, the Klippoth, delighting in evil, whose chief is Belial. These last beings are full of ambition and ever at war with the pure spirits of the three superior spheres, whose empire they unceasingly endeavour to usurp.

[1] He compares them to a set of the hemispherical bowls used by jugglers, fitting loosely one within the other.

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The three superior orders answer exactly to the Amshaspands, Izeds, and Ferouers of Zoroaster, as do the Klippoth in their vast numbers and malicious nature to his Devs. This discord did not exist in the beginning—it was the result of a revolution in heaven, the "Fall of the Seven Kings," from whom the Creator extracted the principle of good and of light,[1] and bestowed it on the inhabitants of the three superior worlds. After the contest shall have endured the time determined from the beginning, the Supreme Being shall deliver the spirits of Asiah from their material envelope, shall fortify the feeble ray of light that is within them, and shall establish throughout creation its pristine harmony.

The human soul is composed of parts borrowed from each of the four worlds. From Asiah it gets the Nephesch, or seat of the physical appetites; from Jezirah, the Ruaeh, the seat of the passions; from Briah, Neshamah, or reason; from Aziluth it obtains Chaiah, the principle of spiritual life.[2]

All the human race having sinned in the first man, that is, as regards their souls, all of which were necessarily contained *within* him at the time of his fall, these souls are exiled hither into prisons of matter, called bodies, in order to expiate that sin and to practise themselves in good. Such as on quitting the body are not sufficiently purified for Aziluth, have to recommence a new penance upon earth.[3]

THE TALMUD.

The doctrine of the Talmud respecting the nature of the Angels is extremely important for the understanding of much in Gnosticism. The whole system, in this particular, is borrowed from the Zendavesta: and could not have originated before, or indeed, without the Captivity: so contrary is it to the

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[1] Similarly the Ophite doctrine makes Achamoth extract from Ildabaoth and his six genii the inherent ray of the Divine Light, in order to bestow it upon man.

[2] The same theory as the Neo-Platonic, of the soul's obtaining its respective faculties from the planets, as it descends through them.

[3] Hence the question of the disciples whether the being *born* blind was a punishment for the sins of the individual, which, if so, must have been committed in a previous life.

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materialistic genius of the Mosaic Law. According to it, the government of all things is intrusted to the angels, of whom there are seventy Princes watching over each element, nation, and language. Thus, *Jehuel* is the Prince of Fire, and has under him seven subordinates; *Seraphiel*, *Gabriel*, *Nuriel*, *Temmael*, *Shimshael*, *Hadarniel*, and *Sarmiel*. Again, *Michael* is Prince of Water, and is similarly attended by seven inferior spirits. There are moreover, an infinity of angels yet lower in degree; guardians of the various animals, plants, the winds, hail, rain, &c. Also over the several passions of the mind, as love, fear, grace, favour, &c. Hence it is not astonishing that the angel who directs the Sun's course, has 296 armies under him, a number expressed by the Hebrew numerals in the words *Haaretz* (the Earth). The chief of all is *Metatron*,[1] the numerical value of his name being 314, and therefore equivalent to that of *Shaddai*, the Almighty. All this fully explains St. Paul's warning to his converts against being seduced into a voluntary or uncalled-for humility, and the worshipping of angels: whilst the frequent occurrence of their names upon our amulets, proves the veneration in which their power was held.

For all these monuments proceed from two sources, the two great schools of Magi mentioned by Pliny: the most ancient, the Chaldean or Magian, founded by Zoroaster and Osthanes, and the more recent by Moses and Jambres. Thus Juvenal, after bringing in the proud and pompous Chaldean, the maker of emperors—

> "Cujus amicitia conducendaque tabella
> Magnus civis obit et formidatus Othoni"—

makes the poor trembling Jewish fortune-teller steal in with whispers for the lady's private ear, whose province went no further than the interpreting, or sending of dreams—

> "Qualiacunque voles Judæi somnia vendunt."[2]

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[1] This is the Persian Mithras: the names of all the other angels are compounded with El, the Hebrew for God, and contain titles or invocations to him.

[2] Such nocturnal revelations were obtained by sleeping with a sigil under one's pillow. Thus Tael, "a most ancient doctor of the children of Israel in the wilderness," says that the figure of a woman with her hair hanging loose, and a man approaching her making a sign of love, engraved on a crystal or jacinth, if placed under one's head on going to sleep, will make one see in a dream whatever he desires.

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Hence, in the following pages, the subject of these monuments is considered under different heads, according to the special religious notions that produced them. The series commences with the Mithraic, as being the most ancient in its origin, and in which the Magian and Jewish, or Kabalistic ideas most frequently are united. To this class succeed the Abraxas stones, properly so called, in which the Magian ideas are modified by the theories of Basilides and a strong tincture of the old Egyptian theology. To Egypt itself more peculiarly belong the Agathodæmon talismans, with the figure of the serpent Chnuphis; a symbol which gave its name to that very numerous and clearly-defined sect, the Ophites. Last of all come the works connected with the worship of Serapis, the most recent, under that name, of all the gods in the Egyptian Pantheon, and in which the Brahminical religion almost unaltered, is most evidently to be traced.

INDIAN SOURCES OF GNOSTIC IDEAS.

The Persian origin of so considerable a portion of the Gnostic creed having now been set forth, it remains to show how much of it may be ascribed to a purely Indian source, and the manner in which so direct an intercourse was established between India and the *foci* of Gnosticism, Alexandria, and Ephesus.

The identity of some of the Gnostic tenets, which will hereafter be considered, as to the duality of the divine emanations, asceticism, penances, self-collection, and absorption into the godhead, with the Buddhistic views on the same points, is sufficiently obvious. The actual circumstances of their introduction from India are fully detailed (in a case having doubtless many parallels), by Epiphanius, in his "Life of Manes" (Haer. lxv.). This famous hæresiarch, equally abhorred by Christian and Zoroastrian orthodoxy, was by birth a Persian, named Cubricus; but who, on commencing his mission, assumed the title of Manes, signifying, in the Babylonian tongue, "The Vessel;" for the same reason, we may suppose, that the schoolmen gave to St. Paul the epithet "Vas Electionis."

Cubricus had been the slave, and afterwards, the sole heir to a

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wealthy widow who had herself inherited all that had belonged to a certain Terbinthus, surnamed in Assyrian, *Budda*. This last had likewise been the servant of a wealthy Saracen, named Scythicus, who had studied the Greek language and literature in some place on the confines of Palestine (perhaps in the schools of Palmyra), and "had there attained to eminence in the empty learning of this world." By constant journeys to and fro into India, this Scythicus had amassed enormous wealth. With this he settled down at Hypsele in the Thebais, where he married a beautiful courtezan, whom he had emancipated. "Here, out of sheer idleness and debauchery, he began to preach new doctrines, not derived from Scripture, but from mere human reason." There can be little doubt that these doctrines were no inventions of his own, but what he had learnt in India. A mere Eastern trader, a common Arab merchant, who, after making his fortune by long and dangerous travels to the East, could afterwards set himself down to study, when advanced in years, nay more, even to attain proficiency in Greek philosophy, must have been a man of no ordinary intellect. Assuredly it was not the want of anything better to do, as the sour-tempered Cretan bishop pretends, that made him set up for the founder of a new religion. It must be borne in mind that the great Indian emporia[1] at this period lay in the northern provinces, where Buddhism, as the Topes and their enclosed relics still attest, was the prevailing religion even when that region was possessed by the Sassanian kings of Persia. "Taking Pythagoras for his guide, he composed four books, viz.: 'The Mysteries;' 'The Summary;' 'The Gospel;' 'The Treasures.'" Pythagoras was universally believed (and with very good reason), to have visited India, and thence to have obtained the elements of his peculiar philosophy; certainly of a strongly-marked Brahminical character. "After this, Scythicus made a journey to Jerusalem in the very times of the Apostles, and held conferences with the elders of the Church there upon the Origin of Evil, and such like points. But not being satisfied by their arguments and explanations, he took to practising magic, the

[1] Such as Baroche and Pultanah.

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knowledge of which he had gotten, together with his other wares, from the *Indians* and *Egyptians*. But as he was showing off a miracle from the roof of his house, he fell down and was killed. Upon this, his slave and sole disciple, Terbinthus, instead of returning to his mistress at Hypsele, ran off with all his money into Persia, where he assumed, in order to avoid detection, the name of *Budda*, which signifies the Sage." This last fact proves incontestably what were the doctrines his late master had been studying in India. Budda also, in Sanscrit, is the planet Mercury, equivalent to the Greek Hermes, the god of Wisdom: a most appropriate title for the runaway slave to assume. "This Terbinthus was himself a man of learning, and conversant with his master's four treatises. He lodged at a widow's house, where he used to hold conferences with the priests of Mithras, especially with two, Parcus,[1] and Labdacus, concerning the Two Principles, &c. He, too, being killed by *accident* like his master, his landlady kept possession of all his property, religious treatises included, and in her turn left them to her servant, Cubricus, the afterwards so celebrated Manes."[2]

In the history of Scythicus the individual, we have in one view the complete history of the origin and growth of Gnosticism. We find an Arab merchant, of a subtle and inquiring genius, occupying himself during his frequent sojourns in India, probably at Baroche, Pultanah, Barcellore, or the Bactrian capital, in studying the philosophy of the then predominant religionists, the Buddhists, and equally investigating the mysteries of Egyptian lore during his occasional residence at the head-quarters of the Indian trade, Alexandria. Then, retiring from business, he goes to Palmyra to study the Greek philosophy as then taught in its schools, which must have been the later Platonism. Thence returning to Egypt, he occupies himself (not out of idleness, as the spiteful historian asserts) in shaping into a consistent body, the various theories on points too high for man's intellect, which he had derived from the

[1] Probably Pacorus.

[2] The above is the substance of the long and somewhat confused history detailed by Epiphanius. This Scythicus was the forerunner of Mahomet; there is a singular analogy in many circumstances of their lives.

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three great fountain-heads of antique knowledge—India, Egypt, and Athens. Finally attracted by the fame of a new revelation, that professed to cast the clearest light upon all Divine mysteries, having been promulgated at Jerusalem, he immediately sets off for the focus of the new light, leaving behind him wife, and all his possessions; only accompanied by one servant, himself an educated man, and his own treasured works on theology. On his arrival at Jerusalem, we find him, naturally enough, altogether disappointed in his hopes of at last obtaining that elucidation of such inscrutable points as the Origin of Evil, &c., on which his thoughts had so long dwelt: for on these secrets the Christian Presbyters could tell him no more than what he had already learnt from the rabbim of Alexandria. He therefore appears to have set up for a teacher himself; and, as might be expected, had his career speedily cut short; not however by an *accident*; for Jerusalem was not a place, about the middle of the first century, where a new religion could be preached with impunity by a single individual, and he an Arab. Hereupon, his disciple, Terbinthus, resolves to visit another school of far-famed wisdom, as yet untried by his master, and confers with the Magi at the head college of Babylon, seeking for an elucidation of his difficulties in the teaching of Zoroaster. It is very probable he engrafted upon his teacher's system, whatever portions of the Zendavesta appeared most satisfactory and consistent with his preconceived ideas of truth. It would be curious to know whether he moulded all his recent acquisitions into a conformity with the original Indian basis of his master's system; such might well have been his guiding principle, for all the religious ideas prevailing in Asia have a latent connection, and all finally converge to one source, and that centered in India. From his assuming the name of Budda, it would appear that such was his course.

Terbinthus, too, comes to an untimely end: the Magi were not heads of a powerful establishment to suffer themselves to be puzzled and confuted by an over-wise foreigner, and to allow him to depart exulting in his victory; as his successor Manes found to his cost.

Manes seems himself to have belonged (probably after obtain-

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ing his freedom and changing his name) to the order of Magi, for he is said to have been famous for his skill in astrology, medicine, magic, and painting.[1] Whether he conceived the scheme from the accidental acquisition of the old treatises of Scythicus or not, he at length gave to these doctrines a definite form, and built up his system with such skill that it spread with marvellous rapidity, not merely through the East, but all Europe, and after seeming to disappear under the long-continued persecution of the Emperors, blazed forth again with extraordinary fury in the Middle Ages. The main object of his scheme was the reconcilement of the two religions that then possessed the two great empires of the world, the flourishing, though still unrecognised, Christianity of the Roman empire, and the equally vigorous and newly-established Zoroastrian of the Sassanian monarchy. Calling himself the promised Paraclete, he accepted the Gospels after purifying them from all taint of Judaism, whilst he utterly rejected the Old Testament. But while in the Zendavesta all begins in harmony and ends in a final reconcilement of the Two Principles, Manes makes these Principles immutable and existing from all eternity as they shall continue to exist. His Good is, as Zoroaster's, the Lord of Light, but his Bad is Satan-Matter. Deliverance from the bondage of the last is to be obtained by the strictest asceticism only. From the Christian Church he borrowed its organization of presbyters and deacons, sensible how greatly that organization had conduced to its rapid development; and, in his own enterprise, with similar success. But his career was speedily brought to a close. The Persian king, Varanes I., about the year 275, alarmed at the rapid spread of these new doctrines, summoned a general council of the Magi, by whom the unfortunate apostle was condemned as a heretic and a traitor against his own order, and by their sentence was flayed alive.

One of his theories is so singular in its character as to deserve notice here. When the Son came into the world to effect the salvation of mankind, he contrived a machine containing twelve bowls (cadi), which, being made to revolve by the motion of the

[1] This last is curious; it shows that the Magi, like the mediæval monks, monopolized the arts as well as the sciences of their times.

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spheres, attracts into itself the souls of the dying. These the great luminary (the sun) takes and purifies with his rays, and then transfers them to the moon, and this is the way in which the disk, as we call it, of the moon is replenished. Epiphanius evidently prides himself on refuting this theory by asking how the moon's light was replenished during the nine hundred years that elapsed after the creation, before any deaths took place?

In the idea of this machine we may trace the influence of the Arab's study of Neo-Platonism at Palmyra, for it is evidently taken from the contrivance of the eight concentric hemispherical bowls (cadi), fitting one inside the other, and put in motion by the Fates, described by Plato in his vision of Er, the Pamphylian, with which the "Republic" closes.

Manes was a genuine Pantheist, teaching that God pervaded all things, even plants, and setting forth the entire scheme of Emanations, as we have already considered it in the more ancient theosophies.

THE BUDDHISTIC SYSTEM.

For the sake of comparison with the above-described doctrines of successive Emanations from the First Principle, the means of escaping from the trammels of Matter, and the struggles of the soul for ultimate absorption into its original source, I shall here subjoin a very brief sketch of the distinguishing features of the Buddhist theology. Here we find a First Buddha, in his proper state of eternal repose, Nevritti (the *indolentia* of Epicurus) corresponding with the "Boundless Time" and the Valentinian *Bythos*. In order to create the universe he produced the *Five* divine Buddhas, the makers of the elements, and these again producing the Five Boodhesativas, by their agency created the material world. The grand aim of this religion is to effect the release of the soul from its connection with Matter. All things exist only in *illusion*, therefore they can only return into non-existence, or repose, by means of True Knowledge (or the *Gnosis*). Illusion is the belief in the reality of the eternal world. The degradation of the soul towards matter is the effect of a succes-

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sion of acts; hence its release is effected by relinquishing the notion of the reality of external objects.

The Buddhists of Nepal, who have preserved the original doctrines of the sect in their greatest purity, teach the following cosmogony:—Padnapani, one of the original Five Emanations, created Brahma, Vishnu, Siva, or the Principles of Creation, Preservation, Destruction. Adi-Buddha first created thirteen mansions for his own eternal abode, and for the dwelling-place after death of Buddha's followers. Below these are eighteen mansions made by Brahma; lower yet are six made by Vishnu; and lowest of all, three the work of Siva. These three series of abodes receive the souls of the followers of their respective founders.

Below all these are the mansions of the Planetary Gods, Indra and Chandra (Uranus and Deus Lunas); then comes the Earth, floating upon the waters like a boat. Below these waters are the seven Patalas, or regions of Hell, the abodes of evil spirits and the damned.

This arrangement presents a most striking similarity to the construction of the Ophite Diagram, as described by Origen, and figured by Matter, in his Hist. Crit. du Gnost., Pl. X.

The promulgation of these Indian tenets from a source so remote—an apparently insurmountable objection—may be readily explained. The Essenes, or Hessenes, Buddhist monks in every particular (see the account of their religion and mode of ascetic life as detailed by Josephus, Ant. Jud., xv. 10), had been established on the shores of the Dead Sea "for thousands of ages"[1] before Pliny's times. "Ab occidente littora Esseni fugiunt usque qua nocent, gens sola et in toto orbe præter ceteras mira, sine ulla femina, omni venere abdicata, sine pecunia, socia palmarum: in diem ex æquo convenarum turba renascitur large, frequentantibus quos vita fessos ad mores eorum fortunæ fluctibus agat. Ita per seculorum *millia*, incredibile dictu gens æterna est

[1] A most extravagant exaggeration, yet serving to establish the antiquity of the sect. It may indeed have been merely a continuation of the associations known as "Sons of the Prophets."

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in qua nemo nascitur, tam fœcunda illis aliorum vitæ pœnitentia est (v. 15)."

That Buddhism had actually been planted in the dominions of the Seleucidæ and Ptolemies (Palestine belonging to the former) before the beginning of the third century B. C., is proved to demonstration by a passage in the Edicts of Asoka,[1] grandson of the famous Chandragupta, the Sandracottus of the Greeks. These edicts are engraven on a rock at Girnur, in Guzerat. To quote the words of Prinsep, to whom the discovery is due (Art. xvii.), "I am now about to produce evidence that Asoka's acquaintance with geography was not limited to Asia, and that his expansive benevolence towards living creatures extended, at least in intention, to another quarter of the globe; that his religious ambition sought to apostolize Egypt, and that we must look hereafter for traces of the introduction of Buddhism into the fertile regions of the Nile, so productive of metaphysical discussions from the earliest ages. The line which I allude to is the fifth from the bottom:—

"And the Greek king (Youa[2] Raja) besides, by whom the Chupta (Egyptian) kings, Ptolemaios and Gongakenos[3] (Antiochus) and Magas, have been induced to allow that both here and in foreign countries everywhere the people may follow the doctrine of the religion of *Devananpiga*, wheresoever it reacheth."

The Buddhist priest is bound by his vows to celibacy, abstinence from meat, and to the obtaining of his sustenance by alms. The word "Essenes" also appears as the title of the annually-elected priests of the Ephesian Diana, who, during their tenure of office, were supposed to observe perfect chastity; for the name comes from the Arabic *Hassan*, pure. Pausanias (viii. 13) mentions this Ephesian institution when speaking of the priest of Diana Hymnia, near Orchomenos, who was bound to chastity for life, and "to keep himself pure in all things else"

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[1] This Asoka, at first a debauchee and tyrant, had embraced the newly-preached doctrines of Buddhism, a species of Brahminical protestantism, and established them through all his dominions, by persuasion and by force, with all the zeal of a new convert.

[2] The Persian envoy in Aristophanes (Acharn.) uses the same word ιαονας for the Greek nation.

[3] Gonatas.

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(εις τα αλλα αγνιστευειν), observing a peculiar mode of life forbidden to enter the baths,[1] or a private house: monkish restrictions one encounters in the Hellenic religion with astonishment, but proving beyond mistake the identity of the Orchomenan worship with the Ephesian.

The influence of the Jewish Essenism, as to rules of life at least upon primitive Christianity, is a thing that cannot be disputed by any who have perused the account of the former, given by Josephus, and above alluded to. How much more influential was their long-established authority with the semi-Christian Gnostics of Syria. It is easy to discover thus the source of the slavish notions as to the merits of asceticism and penances, of which Simon Stylites is the grand example, even in their nature exactly those practised by the Hindoo Fakirs.

His penance, undergone upon the summit of a pillar, had long before been known in Syria. Lucian, in his "Dea Syria," notices the lofty phallus, or obelisk, in front of her temple, on the point of which the devotee sat sleepless for twenty-one days and nights, keeping himself awake by *ringing a bell*. Such ideas pervade the Christianity of the Lower Empire and constitute the very essence of the religion. Neither is it difficult to see in how many points Manes, with his rigid Indian tenets, came into collision with the more humane and rational teaching of Zoroaster, and what good cause Varanes and his general council had for condemning his heresy.

So long as philosophy was cultivated in Greece, India was ever regarded as the ultimate and purest source of true wisdom, or the knowledge of things divine. Even so late as the times of Lucian, the middle of the second century, the author concludes his, evidently true, story of Antiphilus and Demetrius, by making the latter, a Cynic by profession, leave all his property to his friend and go off to India to live with the Brachmans (Toxaris, 34).

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[1] In all religions emanating from the East, personal dirtiness has ever been the recognized outward and visible sign of inward purity: fully exemplified in fakirs, dervises, and mediæval saints. The Greek fathers inveigh against nothing so vehemently as the ancient custom of regular bathing.

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In the same century the famous pilgrimage of Apollonius Tyaneus, and his deep conferences with Iarchus, as recorded by his companion Damis, are sufficiently well known; and although much of the latter's scanty memoranda has been filled up by the fancy of Philostratus, the main facts of his expedition are undoubtedly authentic. His proceedings show how the difficulty of such a journey vanishes upon a knowledge of the circumstances. Apollonius presents himself at the court of the Parthian Bardanes, a *Philhellene*, as he boasts yet upon his medals, and as great an admirer of the Greek savants as any of his Achæmenian predecessors, and obtains from him a firman which secures safety and entertainment to the pilgrim as far as the Parthian limits, extending then, perhaps, beyond the Indus. Thenceforwards his letters of recommendation from the king of kings to the various Indian princes, his allies, procure him an equally favourable reception. A safe and easy communication between each extremity of the Persian empire had from the beginning been the great care of its powerful rulers, the first establishers of posting-stages, post-houses, and roads passing through a populous and well-cultivated country. So favoured with a passport from the sovereign, travelling was both expeditious and agreeable.

These facilities were likewise made use of by the natives of Hindostan. It is curious to observe how the occasional *Brachman* who found his way into Greece was there regarded as a model philosopher, like that Zarmanos Chegan, from Bargose (Baroche), who burnt himself alive upon a pyre at Athens, in the reign of Augustus, of which spectacle, Nicolaus Damascenus was an eye-witness, (Strabo. xv.) His example was followed in the next century by the Peregrinus Proteus, ridiculed so happily by Lucian, who chose for the scene of his self-immolation, the occasion of the Olympic games. This last worthy had been a philosopher, then a Christian, and finally the founder of a new system of his own.

The facts adduced in the foregoing sketch will suffice to indicate the manner in which the germs of the several Gnostic doctrines were imported from the East, how they were engrafted upon previously existing notions, and how vigorously they sprung up and flourished in the congenial soil of Alexandria and Ephesus. To

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complete the general view of the subject,[1] before proceeding to consider the actual monuments left us by these ideas, it will be necessary to give an account of some form in which they assumed their fullest development, and for this purpose nothing can be more suited than the so famous name of the Ophites or Serpent worshippers.

OPHITES.

This sect assumed a definite existence about the same time as the Basilidans, or the middle of the second century, although the elements of their doctrine are derived from a source infinitely more ancient. They are particularly described by Irenæus, writing at the end of that century, in Chapters 31, 32, 33, of his First Book. Like all the other Gnostics, they rejected the Old Testament entirely as emanating from an inferior being, and containing nothing of the revelation of their *Sophia* or Divine Wisdom, whilst the New, though originally of higher authority, had been so corrupted by the interpolations of the Apostles, as to have lost all its value as a revelation of divine truth. They deduced the strongest support for their tenets out of the various Testaments, and similar books then current and ascribed to the Patriarchs, and the most ancient prophets, such as the Book of Enoch.

The primary article of their teaching was the Emanation of all things from the One Supreme, long entirely unknown to mankind, and at last only revealed unto a very small portion, worthy to receive such enlightenment. Hence he is designated by the significant title of *Bythos :* or the Depth : to express his unfathomable, inscrutable nature. Following the Zoroastrians, and the Kabba-

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[1] Leaving out of the question the now received theory as to the immigration into the furthest recesses of Europe of the Indo-Germanic race; modern history furnishes the example of the same thing performed under infinitely greater difficulties by the hordes of low-caste Hindoos, who, flying from the invasion of Tamerlane, diffused themselves throughout Europe and became the Gypsies still retaining their language and customs. They yet take to themselves "Sind," or Sindia, as the proper appellation of the race; and the name of their ancient caste, the Coles, survives in the tradition of their antique and jovial sovereign.

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lists, they also called him the "Source of Light," and the "Primitive Man."[1]

The commencement of Creation, or the First Idea of Emanation, was the *Thought*, *Ennoia*, of Bythos, bearing also the significant name, *Sige*, or *Silence*. This Idea being the first act of creation of the Primitive Man is therefore properly designated "the Second Man."—Ennoia as the consort (the Hindoo Durga) of Bythos, produced *Pneuma*, or the Spirit; which being the source of all ulterior beings is styled "the Mother of all living things," and "the Wisdom from on high," or, *Sophia*. As Mother of all living things, Sophia is the mean between the intellectual and the material world. In consequence of this, when Bythos and Ennoia, charmed with her beauty, fecundated her with the divine light, Sophia produced two new Emanations, one perfect, Christos: the other imperfect, Sophia-Achamoth.[2]

Of these, Christos was designed for the guide of all that proceed from God: Sophia-Achamoth, for the guide of all proceeding out of Matter: yet the perfect being was intended to succour and to lead upwards his imperfect sister.

Again the Spirit, Pneuma, rests upon Chaos, or the elements of Creation, viz., Matter, Water, Darkness, the Abyss. This Chaos was devoid of all life, for that proceeds ultimately from the Supreme, who has no connexion whatever with Matter. Neither could his purely intellectual daughter Sophia act directly upon it; she therefore employed, for her agent, her own Emanation Sophia-Achamoth, whose mixed, imperfect nature fitted her for that purpose.

In the meanwhile the First Tetrad or Quaternion; Bythos, Ennoia, Sophia, and Christos, were creating Ecclesia, or the Idea of the Holy Church. But the imperfect Sophia-Achamoth on descending into Chaos, there lost her way, and became ambitious to create a world entirely for herself. She floated about in the abyss, delighting in imparting life and motion to the inert

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[1] Because man was created "in the image of God," that is, after His likeness.

[2] This scheme is evidently the Buddhistic: Bythos, answering to the first Buddha; Sige, Sophia, Christos, Achamoth, Ildabaoth, to the successive five others.

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elements, until she became so hopelessly entangled in Matter as to be unable to extricate herself from its trammels. In this condition she produced the creator of the material world, or the Demiurgus, Ildabaoth.

After this Sophia-Achamoth, feeling the intolerable burthen of her material part, after long and repeated efforts, at length struggled forth out of Chaos. She had never belonged to the Pleroma, but she attained to the *Middle Space*, where she entirely shook off her material part; and determined to erect a barrier between the world of Intelligences and the world of Matter. Ildabaoth, or "the Son of Darkness," creator and tyrant of the lower world, follows the example of Bythos in producing subordinate Emanations. He first of all generates an Angel in his own image; this Angel a second: and so on up to the number of Six. These are all reflexions one of the other, but they inhabit with their father Ildabaoth Seven different regions: to which the Middle Space, the domain of their origin Achamoth, forms the Eighth. Their names were: Iao, Sabaoth, Adonai, Eloi, Ouraios, Astaphaios. These became the genii of the seven worlds, or planetary spheres. The first four are the mystic titles of the God of the Jews, thus degraded by the Ophites into the appellations of the subordinates of the Creator: the two last signify the Genii of Fire, and of Water.

Besides these Spirits of an elevated rank, Ildabaoth created numerous others, Archangels, Angels, Virtues, Powers, presiding over all the details of creation.

Ildabaoth was far from being a pure spirit; ambition and pride dominated in his composition. He therefore resolved to break off all connexion with his Mother Achamoth, and to create a world entirely for himself. Aided by his own Six Spirits he created Man, intending him for the image of his power: but he failed utterly in his work, his Man proving a vast, soulless, monster crawling upon the ground. The Six Spirits were obliged to bring their failure before Ildabaoth to be animated: he did so by communicating to him the ray of divine light he had himself inherited from Achamoth, who by this deprivation now punished him for his pride and self-sufficiency.

Man thus favoured by Achamoth, at the expense of her own

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son, followed the impulse of the divine light she had thus transferred to him, collected more out of the creation, and began to present not the image of his creator Ildabaoth, but rather that of the Supreme Being, "the Primitive Man." At this spectacle the Demiurgus was filled with rage and envy at having produced a being so superior to himself. His looks, imprinted with his passions, were reflected in the abyss as in a mirror, and the image became animated and forth arose Satan Serpent-formed *Ophiomorphos*: the embodiment of envy and of cunning. He is the union of all that is most base in Matter, with the hate, envy, and craft, of a spiritual intelligence.

Out of their hatred for Judaism the Ophites gave this demon the name of Michael, the guardian angel of the Jewish nation according to Daniel (v. 21). They also called him by the title of *Samael*, the Hebrew name for the prince of the Devils.

In consequence of his spite at the perfection of Man, Ildabaoth set to work to create the three kingdoms of Nature, the Animal, Vegetable, and Mineral, with all the defects and evils they now present. Next, in order to regain possession of the best of things created, he resolved to confine man within his own exclusive domain. In order to detach him from his protectress Achamoth, and from the celestial region, he forbade him to eat of the Tree of Knowledge, which could reveal to him the mysteries, and confer the graces from above. But Achamoth, in order to defeat his schemes, sent her own genius Ophis, in the form of the Serpent[1] to induce him to transgress the command, and thus to break the Law of Jealousy.

Enlightened by eating the fruit, Man became capable of comprehending heavenly mysteries. Nevertheless, Ildabaoth was strong enough to revenge himself; which he did by imprisoning the First Pair in the dungeon of Matter, in the body so unworthy of his nature, wherein Man is still enthralled. Achamoth however continued to protect him: she had extracted from his nature, and absorbed into herself, his particle of Light; and ceases not to supply him therewith, and defend him in all his trials.

[1] Though not so stated, it would seem this form was assumed by Achamoth's agent to deceive the vigilance of Ildabaoth, by appearing like his own offspring, the Ophiomorphos.

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And of this there was full need. A new enemy has come into the field: the genius Ophis, whom Ildabaoth had seized and punished for his share in the business of the Tree of Knowledge, by casting him down into the abyss, becomes there contaminated by his immersion into matter, and is converted into an exact image of his fellow-prisoner, Satan, Ophiomorphos. The latter is the type; Ophis, the antitype; and the two were often confounded. Thus we have another dualism in this scheme; Sophia and Sophia-Achamoth, Adam-Kadmon, and Adam; Ophiomorphos and Ophis.

Ophis, at first Man's friend, now began to hate him as the cause (though innocent) of his own degradation. With Ildabaoth and his Spirits, he continually seeks to chain him to the body, by inspiring all corrupt desires, and more especially earthly love, and the appetites. But Achamoth supplied mankind with the divine light, through which they become sensible of their *nakedness;* that is, the misery of their condition, imprisoned in this body of death, where their sole consolation is the hope of ultimate release.

The seductions of Ildabaoth and his crew gained over the offspring of Adam, except Seth, the true type of the Spiritual Man, and whose descendants kept alive the seed of Light and the knowledge of Divine Wisdom throughout all following generations. When in the Wilderness they received the commandments and institutions of Ildabaoth, and afterwards the teaching of the prophets, inspired by his sons the planetary genii, Achamoth infused into their predictions something higher, not even comprehended by their Master, and made them preach the advent of the Primitive Man, the Eternal Æon, the Heavenly Christ. This same notion was a favourite one with the Cathari of the Middle Ages.

Achamoth was so afflicted at the state of Man that she never rested until she had prevailed upon her mother and type, the celestial Sophia, to move Bythos into sending down Christos to the aid of the Spiritual race of Seth. Ildabaoth himself had been induced to prepare the way for his coming by his own agent, John the Baptist, in the belief that the kingdom Christos came to establish was merely temporal: a supposition fostered in him by the devices of Achamoth. Besides inducing him to send

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the Precursor, she made him cause the birth of the *Man* Jesus from the Virgin Mary; for the creation of a material personage could only be the work of the Demiurgus, not falling within the province of a higher power. As soon as Jesus was born, Christos, uniting himself with Sophia, descended through the seven planetary regions, assuming in each an analogous form,[1] and concealing his true nature from their genii, whilst he attracted into himself the sparks of divine light they retained in their essence. Thus Christos entered into the *Man* Jesus at the moment of his baptism in the Jordan. From that time forth Jesus began to work miracles; before that he had been completely ignorant of his mission. But Ildabaoth, now discovering that he was subverting his own kingdom upon earth, stirred up the Jews against him, and caused him to be put to death. When on the cross, Christos and Sophia left his body and returned to their own sphere. Upon his death, the two took the Man Jesus, abandoned his material body to the earth, and gave him another, made up of *æther*. Thenceforward he consisted of merely soul and spirit, which was the cause that the disciples did not recognise him after the resurrection. During his sojourn upon earth of eighteen months after he had risen, he received from Sophia that perfect knowledge, that true Gnosis, which he communicated to the small portion of the apostles who were capable of receiving the same. Thence ascending up into the Middle Space he sat down on the right hand of Ildabaoth, but unperceived by him, and there collects all the souls which shall have been purified by the knowledge of Christ. When he has collected all the Spiritual, all the Light, out of Ildabaoth's empire, redemption is accomplished, and the end of the world come; which is nothing more than the reabsorption of all Light into the Pleroma, whence it originally descended.

The sect was divided in their opinions as to the nature of Ophis.[2] Though agreed that this genius was originally the agent

[1] In the Ophite Diagram (Origen in Celsum, vi. 25) Michael is figured as a lion, Suriel as a bull, Raphael as a serpent, Gabriel as an eagle, Thautabaoth as a bear, Eratoth as a dog, Ouriel as an ass.

[2] The Ophites worshipped the serpent as the author of all knowledge, touching which they held the following doctrine:—"That the supreme Aeon, having produced other Aeons, one of them, a female, *Prun-*

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of Achamoth, the Ophites in Theodoret's times held that he had been converted into the enemy of Man, although by inducing him to disobey the commands of Ildabaoth he had proved the final cause of his deliverance from that bondage. But the older sectarians, retaining the Egyptian veneration for the Agathodæmon, the Chnuphis Serpent, regarded Ophis as identical with Achamoth, or with Christos. Thus they employed a live serpent, even when Epiphanius wrote, to encircle and consecrate the loaves to be eaten in their Eucharistic Supper.

Again, Tertullian (De Præscript.) has "Serpentem magnificant in tantum ut illum etiam Christo præferant," a clear proof that their Ophis continued to represent the antique solar genius of the Egyptians.[1] It was a peculiarity of that nation that, like the present Hindoos, they were divided, as it were, into sects, each of which adopted some particular deity out of the Pantheon as the exclusive object of their worship; paying no regard to all the rest. As, in Hindostan now, Vishnu and Siva have engrossed the entire worship of the country, so in the first century, Isis, Anubis, and Chneph had become the sole objects of Egyptian adoration, as the monuments hereafter to be reviewed will abundantly evince.

To prove the identity of their genius, Ophis, with the Saviour,

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nicos (Concupiscence), descended into the waters; whence, not being able to escape, she remained suspended in mid-space, being too clogged by matter to return above, and not falling lower where there was nothing of affinity to her nature. Here she produced her son Ildabaoth, the god of the Jews, who in his turn produced seven Aeons, or Angels, who created the seven heavens. From these seven angels Ildabaoth shut up all that was above him, lest they should know of anything superior to himself. They then created man in the image of their father, but prone and crawling on the earth like a worm. But the Heavenly Mother, Prunnicos, wishing to deprive Ildabaoth of the power she had involuntarily endowed him with, infused into man a celestial spark, the soul. Immediately man rose up upon his feet, soared in mind beyond the limits of the eight spheres and glorified the Supreme Father, him that is above Ildabaoth. Hence Ildabaoth, full of jealousy, cast down his eyes upon the lowest stratum of matter, and begot a Virtue in the form of a serpent, whom they call his son. Eve, obeying him as the son of God, was readily persuaded to eat of the tree of knowledge." Such is the summary of their views as given by Epiphanius. That of the foregoing pages is taken from the more detailed description in Theodoret.

[1] Tertullian flourished fully two centuries before Epiphanius, and Theodoret was some fifty years later than Epiphanius.

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they adduced St. John's expression (iii. 14), "For as Moses lifted up the Serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up." The section that regarded the Serpent as evil in its nature had been led astray from the original doctrine by the equally prevalent and antagonistic Zoroastrian and Jewish ideas upon that point.

Before attempting to classify the actual remains of Gnosticism under the respective religions to which they owe their origin, I shall now proceed to a general description of them—their nature, localities, and numbers—taking for my guide the admirably-arranged treatise of Bellermann, of which the two next chapters are indeed little more than a condensation.[1]

ABRAXAS-GEMS.

The genuine Abraxas-gems that we still possess come out of Egypt; out of Asia; some from Spain, where formerly many Basilidans had planted themselves. Amongst this Christian-philosophic sect, a branch of the Gnostics, the figure of Abraxas was held in high esteem. They used it for a teacher, in obedience to whom they directed their own peculiar transcendental inquiries and mystic doctrines; as a token or pass-word amongst the initiated, to show that they belonged to the same sect; as an amulet and talisman; and lastly as a seal for their documents.

Basilides, the founder of the sect, and, as far as can be ascertained, the deviser of the figure of the god Abraxas (a representation which, examination proves, did not exist before his times), flourished under Trajan and Hadrian, or at the end of the first, and early part of the second century. He was by birth an Egyptian, living at Alexandria, and had embraced Christianity, calling himself a disciple of the apostle Matthew, and boasted of having had for his master Glancias, a disciple of St. Peter himself.

Before his conversion he had followed the doctrines of the Oriental Gnosis, and endeavoured, like many others amongst the new converts, to combine the tenets of the Christian religion

[1] S. S. Bellermann's Drei Programmen über die Abraxas-gemmen. Berlin, 1820.

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with the Gnostic philosophy, both spiritual and natural. For this purpose he chose expressions of his own invention, and ingenious symbols. In the promulgation of his peculiar notions concerning God and the Divine attributes, concerning his Word and the creation, the emanation of spirits and of the worlds, the architect of the earth, and the multifarious forces of nature, he took the same road as his contemporary Saturninus in Syria. His complete system was a combination of Christian, Jewish, Pagan, and Egyptian notions; but in a more especial degree embracing those of the Oriental Gnostics, still existing amongst the Brahmins of the present day. Basilides disseminated his tenets, not merely as a zealous teacher of his school in Alexandria, but he was likewise a prolific writer. According to Clemens Alexandrinus, he published twenty-four volumes of "Interpretations upon the Gospels," besides Odes and Spiritual Songs; all of which have perished. His doctrines are thus sketched by Irenæus, his contemporary (i. 23):—

"Basilides, in order to invent something more elaborate and plausible in the Gnostic speculative philosophy, pushed his investigations even into the Infinite. He asserted that God, the uncreated, eternal Father, had first brought forth *Nous*, or Mind; this the *Logos*, Word; this again *Phronesis*, Intelligence; from Phronesis sprung *Sophia*, Wisdom, and *Dynamis*, Strength." Irenæus understands by this that his Quinternion signified five Substances, Personal Intelligences, or Beings external to the Godhead; but it would rather seem that they stood for the personified attributes of the Godhead; forms of his workings externally and internally.[1] Again he asserted, "When the uncreated, unnamed Father saw the corruption of mankind, he sent his first-born, Nous, into the world, in the form of Christ, for the redemption of all who believe in him, out of the power of those that have fabricated the world (the Demiurgus, and his six sons, the planetary genii). He appeared amongst men as the Man Jesus, and wrought miracles. This Christ did not die in

[1] According to this explanation, Basilides had borrowed this idea from the Kabalists; it is, however, more probable that he had gone to a much more remote source for it, and that we find in the Uncreated and the Quinternion, the First Buddha and the successive Five.

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person, but Simon the Cyrenian suffered in his stead, to whom he lent his bodily form;[1] for the Divine Power, the Nous of the eternal Father, is not corporeal, and cannot die. Whoso therefore maintains that Christ has died, is still the bondsman of Ignorance; whoso denies the same, he is free, and hath understood the purpose of the Father."

Irenæus adds of his followers, "They use *images*,[2] invocations, incantations, and all other things pertaining unto Magic."

In these words there is to all appearance an allusion to the figure that has given its popular name to the entire class. Bellermann considers the composite image, inscribed with the actual name Abraxas, to be a Gnostic *Pantheos*, representing the Supreme Being, with the Five Emanations marked out by appropriate symbols. From the human body, the usual form assigned to the Deity, spring the two supporters, Nous and Logos, expressed in the serpents, symbols of the inner senses, and the quickening understanding; on which account the Greeks had made the serpent the attribute of Pallas. His head—that of a cock—represents Phronesis, that bird being the emblem of foresight and of vigilance. His two arms hold the symbols of Sophia and Dynamis: the shield of Wisdom and the whip of Power.[3]

This system agrees wonderfully with the Brahminical; where the First Principle produces in succession the Five Powers—Magaswia, Sadasiva, Rudra, Vishnu, and Brahma; held by some to be mere attributes of the godhead, by others taken in the materialistic sense for Æther, Air, Fire, Water, Earth. The entire Gnostic system was not derived either from the Kabala, or from the Grecian philosophy, but from the East, as Mosheim long ago maintained.

Another circumstance mentioned by Irenæus, will be abundantly illustrated in the progress of these researches. "Further-

[1] Hence the Basilidans were called by the orthodox, *Docetæ* or Illusionists. Similarly the pious Brahmins explain all the legends in their mythology that are inconsistent with divine dignity by saying they were all *Maya* or Illusion.

[2] Or figures.

[3] An ingenious hypothesis: but all these animal constituents have a mystic significance in the Greek mythology, and may each be referred to the sun-god, as will be discussed at length further on.

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more, they have invented proper names for the angels, and class them under the first, second, third heaven, and so on. Besides this, they strive to explain the names, origin, powers, and Æons of their pretended 365 heavens. Similarly they give its own name to the terrestrial sphere, which they say the Saviour (whom they call Kavlacav), has visited, and then quitted. Whoso understands this rightly, and knows the Æons and their respective names, he shall be *invisible to*, and beyond the power[1] of the Æons, just as the Saviour, Kavlacav himself was. As the Son of God remained unknown to the world, so must the disciple of Basilides also remain unknown to the rest of mankind. As they know all this, and yet must live amongst strangers, therefore must they conduct themselves towards the rest of the world as invisible and unknown. Hence their motto—'Learn to know all, but keep thyself unknown;' and therefore they are accustomed to deny the fact of their being Basilidans. Neither can they be detected as Christian heretics, because they assimilate themselves to all sects. Their secret constitution, however, is known to but a few; perhaps to one in a thousand, or two in ten thousand. The local situation of the 365 heavens they parcel out like land-surveyors. Their doctrine is contained in a secret book, or in *symbolic figures*. Their Supreme Lord, the head of all things, they call Abraxas, which name contains the number 365."

ABRAXAS—ITS TRUE ETYMOLOGY.

An ingenious explanation of this mystic title has been proposed by Bellermann; as signifying in Coptic, "The Blessed Name," compounded of *Ab* or *Af*, "Let it be:" *Rak*, "adore;" and *Sax* for *Sadshi*, "name." This compound also agrees in a remarkable manner with the Jewish synonym for the Ineffable Name of Jehovah, viz.: "Shem Hamphirosh," the "Holy Word:"

[1] A satisfactory explanation of the frequency of the talismans covered with long strings of barbarous names; they must have been carried about by the adept to enable him, on occasion, by reciting their titles, thus to elude their evil influence.

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which was compressed by the Rabbins into "The Name," or "The Word."

It is also a most singular coincidence that the Egyptian word *Abrak* is used by Moses (Gen. xli. 43), where Pharaoh commands that Joseph shall ride in his own chariot, and that they shall cry before him, "Abrak!" kneel down! where the *Egyptian word* is actually retained in the *Hebrew text:* and not expressed by an equivalent in that language.[1]

Analogous to this appears the circumstance that the name *Abracura* is inscribed over the consort of *Dispater:* the two infernal deities, before whom Vibia is conducted by Hermes, in the very remarkable fresco existing in the tomb of Vincentius and Vibia, in the catacombs of Prætextatus. Now, this Vincentius is described, in his epitaph, as "the priest of Sabazis:" a title in itself connected with the Iao-religion. Abracura is evidently the Latinized spelling of Αβρα κορη: the latter, "the Virgin," the usual mystic name for Proserpine: whilst *Abra*, perhaps, bears the same meaning as in the Gnostic terminology, where it also enters into the composition of the famous spell Abracadabra.

THE ÆONS.

So much virtue being attached to a true knowledge of the names of the Æons, it would be unpardonable not to subjoin them; and the following may be considered as their most authoritative register, being that drawn up by Valentinus himself, the profoundest doctor of the Gnosis. He arranges them in pairs, male and female;[2] in the order of their successive emanation from Bythos, the pre-existent, eternal Principle. The number of the pairs is *fifteen;* or the sacred numeral five three

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[1] In Apoc. xix. 12, we have the precedent for thus expressing a title in an unknown tongue: "His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns, and he had a name written (thereon) that no *man knew but he himself;* and he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood, and his name is called: The Word of God."

[2] It is a necessity in the Hindoo mythology that every god has a Sacti or female consort, through whom he acts.

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times repeated. Their names, it will be observed, are Syriac, the *va* preceding the appellation of some of the female powers, being merely the copulative "and." Matter supposes Valentinus to have been of Jewish origin, although born at Alexandria; Tertullian states that he was first of all a Platonist, then a convert to Christianity; but disappointed in his aspirations to a bishopric, he founded a religion of his own.

1. Ampsiu and Ouraan	Depth and Silence.
2. Bucuua, Thartuu	Mind, Truth.
3. Ubucua, Thardeadia	Reason, Life.
4. Meraxa, Artababa	Man, Church.
5. Udua, Casten . . 5a. Udu, Vacasteni . }	Comforter, Faith.
6. Amphaiu, Essumen	Fatherly, Hope.
7. Vananim, Lamer	Motherly, Charity.
8. Tarde, Athames	Eternal, Intelligence.
9. Susia, Allora	Light, Beatitude.
10. Buciatha, Dammaddaria . . .	Eucharistic, Wisdom.
11. Allora, Dammo	Profundity, Mixture.
12. Oren, Lamasspechs	Unfading, Union.
13. Andempheets, Emphibochibaud .	Self-born, Temperance.
14. Assiouache, Belin	Only-begotten, Unity.
15. Dexariche, Massemo	Immoveable, Pleasure.

Epiphanius has evidently copied one pair (5) twice over, misled by a difference in the spelling, which makes one pair beyond the proper fifteen.

PROCESSION OF THE LOGOS, OR WORD.

Perhaps the most singular, certainly the most characteristic chapter in this transcendental science is the Theogony disclosed in the "Revelation of Marcus," the apostle of the Marcosiani. "The Supreme Quaternion came down unto him from that region that cannot be seen or named, in a female shape, because the world would have been unable to bear them appearing in a masculine form; and revealed unto him the generations of the universe, untold before to either gods or men. When first the Father, the Inconceivable, Beingless, Sexless, began to be in

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labour, he desired that his Ineffable should be born, and his Invisible should be clothed with form; he therefore opened his mouth, and uttered the Word like unto Himself. This Word standing before Him showed what He was, manifesting himself as the Type or Form of the Invisible.

"Now, the uttering of the Name came to pass in this wise:—He (the Supreme) spoke the first word of His Name, which is a syllable of four letters. He then added the second syllable, also of four letters. Then, the third, composed of ten letters. Finally, the fourth, made up of twelve letters. Thus, the utterance of the whole Name consists of thirty letters, and of four syllables. Each letter has a form, pronunciation, and spelling of its own; but neither beholds nor understands that of the entire Name: not even the powers of the letter standing next to itself. Now, these united sounds make up the Beingless, Unbegotten, Æon; and these are the angels that always behold the face of the Father. Thus the Father, knowing himself to be Incomprehensible, gave to each of the letters, called Æons, its own peculiar sound, inasmuch as none of them, singly, is competent to utter the entire Name."

The subsequent revelations of the Quaternion to Marcus, serve to explain the frequent occurrence of the naked female, the former Venus Anadyomene, on Gnostic monuments. "After having declared these things, the Quaternion added: I will show unto thee *Truth*, whom I have brought down from the celestial mansions, that thou shouldest behold her naked, acknowledge her beauty, hear her speaking, and be astonished at her wisdom. Look up, therefore, at her head, A and Ω; at her neck, B and Ψ; at her shoulders, with her hands, Γ and X; at her breasts, Δ and Φ; at her chest, E and Υ; at her back, Z and T; at her belly, H and Σ; at her thighs, Θ and P; at her knees, I and Π; at her legs, K and O; at her ancles, Λ and Ξ; at her feet, M and N.[1] This is the body of Truth: this is the form of the Letters: this is the character of the Writing. Whereupon

[1] This figure, it will be perceived, is made by taking successive pairs of letters from each extremity of the alphabet; perhaps thus constituting them masculine and feminine.

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Truth, looking upon Marcus, opened her mouth, and uttered a Word; and this Word became a Name—a Name which we know and speak—Christ Jesus; and having named him she held her peace."

Before quitting this subject, a rational doubt obtrudes itself, whether the primary application of the term Logos to the Divine Emanation, was not intended for the mere interpretation of the Rabbinical term, "Name or Word:" in fact, only the abbreviation of "Ineffable Name," or Jehovah; and later, the secondary meaning of Logos, viz., Reason, suggested an immediate analogy to the Platonizing Jews of Alexandria, with their Sophia-Achamoth, the first-born of the Supreme Cause.

The composition of this Name extending to the length of thirty letters, may serve to afford some clue to the meaning of the interminable, polysyllabic title, which runs either in one unbroken circle, or else assuming the curved form of an erect serpent, around the margin of many Gnostic talismans, enclosing the mystic design therein engraved. An example of this appears to be recognizable in the calcedony I have drawn in Plate vi., 4.

EGYPTIAN DEITIES.

As the deities of the ancient mythology continue to hold their place upon the earliest productions of the Basilidan sect, some insight into their mystic purpose, and reasons for their adaptation to the new system, may be obtained from a knowledge of the sense in which the powers and the attributes of these ancient gods were interpreted when their worship was the sole and undisputed creed of the land. A brief notice is therefore subjoined of the principal deities, and the forms under which they are to be recognized—together with their Coptic titles so often met with on our monuments, in strange juxtaposition with the holy names of the Jewish Angels, with those of the Magian genii, with titles of Indian origin; the very terminology of the religion indicating its remote and multifarious sources.

1. Phthas: phonetic name Ptah, is represented in a close-fitting robe, his feet joined together, standing upon a base of four steps,

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called the "Four Foundations," typifying the elements.[1] Sometimes he appears as a dwarf, and Priapean; sometimes as Ptah-Tore, with a scarabeus for a head. His proper attribute is the baboon, the Cynocephalus.

2. Ammon, phonetic Amn: with a human or sometimes a ram's head, from which rises a double, particolored plume. He has an artificial beard, and bears a sceptre. He is modified into Pan-Mendes, Priapean, and brandishing a whip; with his feet bound together in the character of Ammon-Chnubis; he has goats' horns: and often he is figured as the Serpent, called by the Greeks, Agathodæmon. His symbol, the vase Canopus, is so called from his title Chnubis, thus pronounced by the Greeks. United with the Sun he becomes Ammon-Ra.

3. The Sun-god, Phre or Ra: with hawk's head supporting a disk and the serpent Uræus. Plate ii., 2.

4. Thoth, or Thoyt; ibis-headed, the Scribe of the gods. Sometimes he appears with the head of a hawk, as Hermes Trismegistus. His symbol is the winged disk (Tat): answering to the *Mir* of the Persians.

5. Sochos, or Suchos: with a crocodile's head; or else symbolized by a crocodile with the tail bent.

6. The Moon-god, Pe-*Ioh* (Pe is the Coptic definite article), with his feet close together; a single lock of hair upon the head, and the crescent. Again, this deity is figured as hermaphrodite, casting gold-dust over the heavens: that is, bespangling them with stars.

7. Osiris; Ousri: as a Man, distinguished by his tall cap, holding a crook and a whip. The Eye is his symbol.

8. Arocres; Aror: the Horus of the Greeks, has a single lock of hair on his head: he is represented suckled by Isis, or else seated on the lotus; sometimes wearing the hawk's head. His symbol, the hawk at the breast of Isis, appears in a basalt torso in the Borgia Collection.

9. Anubis; Anbo: is always jackal-headed: and sometimes has a human head besides, springing from a separate neck. This Coptic name, Anbo, may often be recognised in our formulæ.

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[1] Afterwards adopted by the Rosicrucians in the same sense.

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10. Bebon, or Babys, has a hippopotamus's head, or else a crocodile's: in his hand a sword. This figure used to be taken for Typhon. He represents the constellation Ursa Major in the Zodiac of Denderah.

GODDESSES.

1. Neith: expressed by the vulture, or by a female with the head of a vulture or a lion. In the latter case she takes the title of Taf-Net.

2. Athor: figured with the head of a cow, or else a woman's crowned, with the vulture overshadowing it. She is denoted by a hawk within a square.

3. Isis: a female with cows' horns, between which rests the discus.

4. Sate: the Grecian Hera, with plumes on her head, represents *Truth;* and so appears in the Judgment of the Dead.

The four Genii of the Amenthes or Hades, having respectively the heads of a man, jackal, baboon, and hawk, are often placed together, as mummy-like figures, upon the Canopic vases.

SYMBOLS EXPLAINED.

Plutarch, in his treatise "De Iside et Osiride," has explained certain of the most frequent symbols, and that, it would seem, upon the best authority.

Isis sometimes signifies the Moon, when she is represented by the crescent: sometimes the Earth, as-fecundated by the waters of the Nile. Hence water, as the issue of Osiris, is carried in a vase in her processions.

Osiris is signified by a figure of an Eye and a Sceptre: his name being compounded of *Os*, many; and *Iris*, eye.

The Fig-leaf stands for *King*, or else for the South.

The Lizard, which was supposed to conceive by the ear and to bring forth through the mouth, is the type of the generation of the Word: *i. e.*, of the Logos, or Divine Wisdom. (A satisfactory explanation of the lizard placed upon Minerva's breast, as seen on some gems.)

The Scarabeus, in its making globes for the reception of its

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eggs, and in its retrograde movements, imitates the motion of the Sun. The insect also has no female; so at least ran the popular opinion in Egypt.

The Asp expresses a Star; for like that luminary, it moves swiftly without any organs of locomotion.

The Ibis stands for the Moon: its legs when extended making an equilateral triangle.[1]

Horus wears a wreath of Persea-leaves, because the fruit of that tree resembles the *heart*, as its leaves do in shape the human tongue. The legend goes that the tree (Cordia Myxa, or Sebestene Plum) was first planted at Memphis by Perseus, and hence its name. In memory of his mythical ancestor, Alexander ordained that a wreath of its branches should form the prize in the games he instituted at his new capital. The tree is never without a succession of fruit and leaves; the former Pliny compares to a red plum; and also states that the tree will not grow in Europe.

Horapollo's interpretation of the Sacred Animals so often figured on these relics, may be briefly noticed here in connexion with the more important symbols. But his whole treatise bears on its very face the evidence of having been excogitated by some pragmatical Alexandrian Greek, perfectly ignorant of what he was writing about, but impudently passing off his own conjectures for traditional interpretations of the symbols upon the works of antiquity surrounding him. He must have written under the Lower Empire, when the knowledge of hieroglyphical inscriptions was entirely lost: for it was still kept up in the first century: Tacitus particularly notes that *an aged priest* read to Germanicus the ancient historical tablets, on his visit to Thebes.[2] It is only in some rare instances that Horapollo has

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[1] It is hard to see the analogy between the moon and a triangle; but such was certainly accepted in their symbolism; and often this figure appears set upon a column and adored by the Cynocephalus, Luna's favourite beast.

[2] "Mox visit veterum Thebarum magna vestigia: et manebant structis molibus literæ Aegyptiæ priorem opulentiam complexæ; jussusque e *senioribus* sacerdotum patrium sermonem interpretari," (An. ii. 60). This visit was made A.D. 19. It would hence appear that already the knowledge of the hieroglyphic character was fast dying out.

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preserved some ancient and correct traditions as to the purport of symbols the most popular and obvious, and therefore the last to be forgotten.

The Baboon, Cynocephalus, denotes the Moon, because he has a certain sympathy with that luminary, and during her dark quarter sits without eating, his eyes fixed upon the ground, as though mourning for her loss. Also he denotes the priesthood, being by nature circumcised, and abhorring fish and fishermen. Erect, and with paws lifted up, and a basilisk (Asp) upon his head, he symbolises the New Moon, the first appearance of which he thus congratulates. By his voiding his urine at fixed and regular intervals, he first suggested to observers the regular division of the day into hours: and furnished the first idea of the invention of the Clepsydra, or water-clock.

The Dog (Jackal) represents the Sacred Scribe, because that functionary ought always to be studying; and likewise should bark at and make himself disagreeable to every body. In another sense he expresses a Prophet, from his habit of staring fixedly at the statues of the gods.

Hawk stands for God, or the Sun. Lion, from the resemblance of his round face to the solar disk, is placed under the throne of Horus, as the Egyptians name the Sun.

The rising of the Nile, called in the Egyptian tongue *Now* or *New*, is denoted by a lion, or by three large vases, because the flood attains its greatest height when the sun is in that sign: on which account also the dischargers of the sacred fountains are made in the form of lions' heads.

By the Ibis they signify the heart, because that bird is an attribute of Hermes (Thoth), who presides over the heart and all reason. The Ibis also, in its own shape, resembles the figure of a heart; touching which matter, there is a very long legend current amongst the Egyptians.

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DESCENT OF THE SOUL: PLATONIC.

The powers and influence of the Planetary Genii, sons of Ildabaoth, and the astrological notions as to the influence of the planets upon man's fortune in this life, come apparently from the same source as the strange doctrine touching the planetary origin of the faculties of the human soul taught by the later Alexandrian Platonists, and thus expounded by Macrobius (Somn. Scip. I. 12). "The Soul, as it descends from the one and indivisible source of its being, in order to be united to the body, passes through the Milky Way into the Zodiac at the intersection of the two in Cancer and Capricorn, called the 'Gates of the Sun,' because the two solstices are placed in these signs. Through Cancer, or the 'Gate of Man,' the soul descends upon earth, which is its spiritual death. Through Capricorn, the 'Gate of the Gods,' it re-ascends up to heaven, its new birth taking place upon its release from the body. As soon as the soul has left Cancer and the Milky Way, it begins to lose its divine nature, and arriving at Leo enters upon the first phase of its future condition here below. During its downward progress the soul, at first a *sphere* in form, is elongated into a *cone*, and now begins to feel the influence of Matter, so that it joins the body intoxicated and stupified by this novel draught. This circumstance is typified by the Crater of Bacchus placed in the heavens between Cancer and Leo. The Soul thus descending, as it passes through each sphere, receives successive coatings, as it were, of a luminous body, and is furnished with the several faculties which it has to exercise during its probation upon earth. Accordingly, in Saturn it is supplied with reason and intelligence; in Jupiter, with the power of action; in Mars, with the irascible principle; in the Sun, with sensation and speculation; in Venus, with the appetites; in Mercury, with the power of declaring and expressing its thoughts; in the Moon, with the faculty of generating and augmenting the body."

Hence as the Planets contain all the elements, so to speak, that make up the Inner Man, the Genii, their rulers, exercise their tyranny over it through such agencies so long as the soul is subjected to them during its imprisonment in the body.

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Cognate to this theory is the doctrine of the "Servants of Saturn," in the remotest North (evidently a relic of the Druidical philosophy), preserved by Plutarch in his curious treatise on "The Face in the Moon's Orb." This taught, that in the generation of Man the Earth supplies the body, the Moon, the ψυχη, the Sun the νους. What the ψυχη is to the body, the same is the νους to the ψυχη. This composite nature undergoes a double death. In the first, Demeter, whose fellow is the earthly Hermes, forcibly separates the ψυχη, or soul, from the body. The Soul, after a certain penance in the Middle Space, in order to purify it from the pollution of the body, is caught up by the Moon, and passes through the Earth's shadow during the eclipse, after a probation proportioned in time to its deserts; but the wicked, as they strive to enter (before their purification is complete), are scared away by the terrible face. The good abide in the Moon[1] in the enjoyment of tranquillity; become converted into Δαιμονες, or Genii, busy themselves in regulating human affairs upon earth, render oracles, &c. But if these beatified spirits misconduct themselves, they are put again into a human body, and sent back to the earth.

After a certain time the νους, or Mind, aspires to return to its source, the Sun, when Persephone, with her colleague the heavenly Hermes, gently and gradually separates it from the grosser ψυχη. This is the second death; the νους flying up to the Sun, the ψυχη abiding in the Moon in a dreamy existence, until it is totally absorbed into her substance, exactly as the Earth absorbs the remains of the body. Calm and philosophic souls are quickly absorbed, but active, passionate, erotic natures with great difficulty; they wander about in mid-space divested of their νους, becoming Tityi and Typhones, throwing confusion into oracles, as Typhon does at Delphi, until at last they also are attracted into and absorbed by the Moon.[2]

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[1] This is the identical doctrine of Manes: no wonder that Pliny was struck by the analogy between Druidism and the tenets of the Magi.

[2] Justinus Kerner, in his 'Scherin von Prevorst,' most ingeniously anatomizes the inner man, and makes him consist of Seele, Nerven-geist, and Geist. The Nerven-geist, or nervous energy, being of a grosser nature, continues united with the Seele on its separation from the body, rendering it

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MITHRAIC MONUMENTS.

These may be considered as representing the purely Persian element, so important an ingredient in Gnosticism. The Mithras-worship at first indeed makes its appearance as a distinct creed, said to have been introduced into Rome after the conquest of Pontus by Pompey, where however it speedily became so popular, as with the earlier-imported Serapis-worship, to have entirely usurped the place of the ancient Hellenic and Italian deities. In fact, during the second and third centuries of the Empire, Serapis and Mithras may be said to have become the sole objects of worship even in the remotest corners of the Roman world. It was the theology of Zoroaster in its origin, but greatly simplified, so as to assimilate it to the previously existing systems of the West. Under this form it took its name from Mithras, who in the Zoroastrian creed is not the Supreme Being, Ormuzd, but the chief of the subordinate powers, or Amshaspands. Mithra is the Zend title of the Sun, the peculiar domain of this Spirit, and hence he was admitted by the Greeks as their former Phœbus and Hyperion. Thus Ovid "Placat equo Persis radiis Hyperiona cinctum." In the same character he was identified with Dionysus and Liber, or Phanaces, the Sun-god of the Asiatics, and his mysteries replaced the ancient Dionysia. How important the Mithraica had become in the second century, appears from the fact recorded by Lampridius, that Commodus condescended to be initiated into them. With their penances and tests of the courage of the candidate for admission, they have been maintained by a constant tradition through the secret societies of the Middle Ages and the Rosicrucians, down to the modern faint reflex of the latter, the Freemasons. On these heads more particulars will be given when their distinctive monuments come under consideration. My object now is to trace

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visible in the form of an apparition, and enabling it to affect material objects, make noises, move articles, and such like things perceptible to the living senses, in short, to "spucken." According to its nature, this composite being takes a longer or shorter time to be dissolved, the Geist alone being immortal.

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the gradations by which the Mithraic ideas merge into the Alexandrian and semi-Christian Gnosticism.

That the mysterious title *Abraxas*, said to have been devised by the Egyptian Basilides, means "Holy Name," has been fully demonstrated by Bellermann. That the symbolical figure embodying the idea refers to the Sun is equally certain. Similarly, the Hindoo "Ineffable Name," is applied in the *Gaytri* to the "Fierce and all-pervading Sun." Basilides was not by any means a Christian heretic, as the later Fathers found it expedient to represent him, but rather as his contemporary Clement relates, "a philosopher devoted to the contemplation of divine things;" and in all likelihood imbued with the Buddhistic notions, which the perpetual intercourse between Alexandria and the Indian coast had long before naturalized in Egypt and Palestine. Hence we sometimes find Mithraic and Abraxas amulets combined in the same gem, the finest sample of which is a green jasper (Marlborough Cabinet), exhibiting on one side Mithras slaughtering the Bull, on the other Abraxas himself. In the later philosophy, as we shall presently find in the case of Serapis himself, the primary idea of all the principal deities was explained as symbolizing the solar luminary; and their numerous names designating not separate beings, but attributes of one and the same. A truly Hindoo notion, whereby their apparently unlimited polytheism is reduced, for the enlightened Brahmin, to the acknowledgment of the One Supreme.

There is very good reason to believe that as in the East the worship of Serapis was at first combined with Christianity, and gradually merged into it with an entire change of name, not substance, carrying with it many of its ancient notions and rites; so in the West a similar influence was exerted by the Mithraic religion. Seel (Mith. p. 287) is of opinion that "as long as the Roman dominion lasted in Germany we find also traces of the Mosaic Law; as there were single Jewish, so were there also single Christian families existing amongst the Gentiles. The latter, however, for the most part ostensibly paid worship to the Roman gods in order to escape persecution, holding secretly in their hearts the religion of Christ. It is by no means improbable that under the permitted symbols of Mithras they worshipped the Son of God and

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the mysteries of Christianity. In this point of view the Mithraic monuments so frequent in Germany are evidences of the secret faith of the early Christian Romans."

That such a connexion was actually declared by the partisans of Mithraicism when in its decline, is proved by the express statement of Augustine (In Johan. I., Dis. 7), "I know that the priests of him in the cap (istius pileati) used at one time to say, 'our capped one is himself a Christian.'" In this asserted affinity we find also an explanation of the motive which induced Constantine to adopt for the most general reverse upon his copper coinage, retained long after his conversion, the figure of the Sun, with the legend, "To the Invincible Sun, my companion (or guardian);"[1] as being a personification either of the ancient Phœbus or the new Sun of Righteousness, equally acceptable to both Christian and Gentile, from the double interpretation of which that type was susceptible.

Similarly the ancient festival held on the 25th day of December in honour of the "Birthday of the Invincible One," and celebrated by the "Great Games" of the Circus (as marked in the ancient Kalendar VIII. KAL. IAN. N. INVICTI. C.M.XXIV.[2]), was afterwards transferred to the commemoration of the Birth of Christ, the precise day of which many of the Fathers confess was then unknown. Thus Chrysostom (Hom. 31) quotes the above direction of the Kalendar, and rightly understands it as referring to the Birthday of the Invincible Mithras, adding, "On this day also the Birthday of Christ was *lately* fixed at Rome in order that whilst the heathen were busied with their profane ceremonies, the Christians might perform their holy rites undisturbed." Again he exclaims, "But they call this day the Birthday of the Invincible One: who so invincible as the Lord that overthrew and vanquished Death? Or because they style it the Birthday of the Sun? He is the Sun of Righteousness of whom Malachi saith, 'Upon you, fearful ones, the Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in his wings.'" And Leo the Great (Serm. II. on the Birth of the Lord) blames those Christians who gave

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[1] SOLI INVICTO COMITI.

[2] C.M.XXIV. signifies 24 consecutive courses in the chariot-races given in the Circus Maximus.

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offence to the weaker souls through the shameful persuasion of some by whom this festival of ours is reverenced not so much on account of Christ's Birth as on that of the "Rising of the New Sun," to use their own words. Again the traditional names of the Three Magi appear to have been in their origin mere epithets of the Solar Deity, whose properties they express; thus *Caspar* = The White One, *Melchior* = King of Light, *Baltazar* = Lord of Treasures.[1] (Baltasar is the Septuagint spelling of Belshazzar.) Mithras was naturally enough admitted as a type of Christ, the Creator and Maintainer of the Universe, seeing that the Zoroastrian creed declares him to be the first emanation of Ormuzd, the Good Principle, and his manifestation of himself to the world.[2] It was from this creed that the Jews, during their long sojourn in Persia, in all probability derived the spiritual portion of their religion such as we find it flourishing during their second kingdom. Then, and not before, we discover them holding the belief in a future state of rewards and punishments, the latter carried on in a fiery lake, the existence of a complete hierarchy of angels as well as of demons, the soul's immortality, and the Last Judgment; all which notions were important features of Zoroaster's scheme, and are recognised by Josephus as equally essential portions of the Jewish religion of his own times.

To all these ideas Moses in the Law makes not the remotest allusion; and even to the last days of Jerusalem we find the Sadducees continuing perfect Secularists: and these represented the most ancient and wealthiest families of the race, priding themselves on keeping the Law of Moses pure and undefiled from the foreign doctrines imbibed by the majority during their enforced sojourn amongst the Gentiles. It is hardly necessary here to allude to the ingenious theory of Bishop Warburton, set forth in

[1] The bas-relief over the gate of the Baptistery, Parma (12th century), is generally regarded as a Mithraic monument; and certainly it is difficult to explain the design on purely Christian grounds.

[2] Mithras used to be invoked together with the sun, and thus came to be confounded with that luminary: whence he became the object of a separate worship, which in later times eclipsed that of Ormuzd himself, and was much better known than the original to the people of the West. The secondary deities have often usurped the honours of those of the first rank, as Vishnu and Siva in the case of Brahma, Serapis over the older gods of Egypt, Jupiter over the primitive Italic, &c.

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his "Divine Legation of Moses," who converts this entire omission of all spiritualism from his teaching into the strongest argument in support of its direct inspiration from Heaven. But from whatever source derived, how closely does this Magian idea of the nature and office of Mithras coincide with the definition of the Saviour's nature given by the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, a profound Jewish theologian, as being "the brightness (or rather the reflexion[1]) of His glory, and the express image (or model) of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power;" and, again, "as being made so much better than the angels, as He hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they"!

The Mithraic rites bore a strong resemblance to many subsequently established in the Catholic Church, and supplied the model also of the initiatory ceremonies observed in the secret societies of the Middle Ages, and by their representatives in modern times. The believers were admitted by the rite of baptism, they had a species of Eucharist, whilst the courage and endurance of the neophyte were tested by twelve consecutive trials called *Tortures*, undergone within a cave constructed for the purpose, before he was admitted to a participation in the mysteries. These rites are alluded to by Justin Martyr (Apol. II.) in the earliest notice of them now extant. "The Apostles in the commentaries written by themselves, which we call Gospels, have delivered down to us how that Jesus thus commanded them: He having taken bread after He *had given thanks*,[2] said, Do this in commemoration of me; this is my body. And having taken a cup and returned thanks he said, This is my blood, and delivered it to them alone. Which thing indeed the evil spirits have taught to be done out of mimicry in the mysteries and initiatory rites of Mithras. For in these a cup of water and bread are set out, with the addition of certain words, in the sacrifice or act of worship of the person about to be initiated, a thing which ye either know by personal experience or may

[1] This reflexion of the Invisible Supreme, in his First Emanation, is a distinguishing feature of the Gnostic theogonies already noticed.

[2] This expression shows that the notion of blessing or consecrating the elements was as yet unknown to the Christians.

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learn by inquiry." Again on this point Tertullian in the next century has (Præscript.) "The Devil, whose business it is to pervert the truth, mimics the exact circumstances of the Divine Sacraments in the mysteries of idols. He himself baptizes some, that is to say, his believers and followers: he promises forgiveness of sins from the *sacred fount*, and thus initiates them into the religion of Mithras; he thus marks on the forehead his own soldiers: he there celebrates the *oblation of bread;* he brings in the symbol of the Resurrection,[1] and wins the crown with the sword." The last usage he thus explains: "Blush, my Roman fellow-soldiers, even if ye are not to be judged by Christ, but by any soldier of Mithras, who when he is undergoing initiation in the cave, the very camp of the Powers of Darkness, when the *wreath* is offered to him (a sword being placed between as if in semblance of martyrdom) and then about to be set on his head, he is warned to put forth his hand and push the wreath away, transferring it to, perchance, his shoulder, saying at the same time, My only crown is Mithras. And thenceforth he never wears a wreath;[2] and this is a mark he has for a test, whenever tried as to his initiation, for he is immediately proved to be a soldier of Mithras if he throws down the wreath offered to him, saying his crown is in his god. Let us therefore acknowledge the craft of the Devil, who mimics certain things of those that be divine in order that he may confound and judge us by the faith of his own followers." But a dispassionate examiner will discover that these two zealous Fathers somewhat beg the question in assuming that the Mithraic rites were invented as counterfeits of the Christian Sacraments; the former having really been in existence long before the promulgation of Christianity. So far from this being the case, there is very good reason to suspect that the simply commemorative or distinctive rites instituted by Christ himself, were afterwards invested with the mystic and supernatural virtues, in a later age insisted upon as articles of faith,

[1] Meaning, no doubt, that simulation of death and of restoration to life expressed by the corpse *under* the horse's feet, so often depicted on these stones. See Plate II. 1.

[2] Which was the universal custom of the ancients at all festivals, so that the being without one was in itself a most distinctive badge of singularity.

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by succeeding and unscrupulous missionaries eager to outbid the attractions of more ancient ceremonies of a cognate character. Thereby they offered to the convert, through the fulfilment as it were of certain magical ceremonies, all those spiritual advantages of which the rites themselves were originally designed as the symbols, not the instruments.

In the particulars that have come down to us of the celebration of these Mithraic sacraments, certain singular analogies arrest our attention. The "bread" used was a round cake, emblem of the solar disk, and termed the *Mizd*, in which word Seel detects the etymology of the name *Missa*[1] applied to the "Bloodless sacrifice," for this Mizd was certainly the prototype of the Host, which is circular and of the same dimensions. The "cup" or chalice frequently is figured standing on the Mithraic altar, or rather "*table*;" and a curious piece of jugglery in its employment is recorded by Epiphanius (Hæres. xxxiv.). In the celebration of the Eucharist by the Marcosii (a semi-Christian sect) three vases made of the clearest glass were introduced. These were filled with white wine which, during the progress of the rite, instantaneously changed into a blood-red purple and blue colour respectively. "Then the officiating minister, or Magus as Epiphanius styles him, hands one of these vases to a lady in the congregation and requests her to bless it. Which done he pours out of it into another vase of much greater capacity,

[1] The popular derivation of *Missa* from the concluding words of the service, "Ite, missa est," is absurd in the extreme. It is the *object* sacrificed that gives its name to the rite (according to the rule in such cases), and this object, the Wafer, has ever been styled the *Hostia*, the victim, in Hebrew *Messah*. The first converts, as well as the Gnostics, were fond of naturalising Hebrew words, and applying them to their own customs. Thus *Phase* is the technical term for the "Old Covenant."

"In hac mensa novæ legis
Novum Pascha novi Regis
Phase vetus terminat."

The Latin term "Missa" is a neuter noun; in itself a complete refutation of the vulgar derivation. The Rabbins have preserved a tradition, and a true one, for once, of the origin of the Wafer. Alphonsus de Spira, in his Fortalicium Fidei (II. 2), says that its circular form is a symbol of the Sun, and that it is offered to the genius of that luminary as a victim. For the Talmudists hold that Abraham and the Prophets were inspired by the genius of Saturn, a good and pure spirit; but Jesus by that of Mercury, a malevolent one; and the Christian religion was the work of Jupiter, Mercury, and the Sun, all combining together for the purpose.

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with the prayer, 'May the grace of God, which is above all, inconceivable, inexplicable, fill thy inner man, and augment the knowledge of Him within thee, sowing the grain of mustard-seed in good ground.' Whereupon the liquor in the larger vase swells and swells until it runs over the brim."

The worship of Mithras long survived in Rome under the Christian emperors, and, doubtless, much longer in the remoter districts of the semi-independent provinces. After A.D. 400, Jerome, writing to Læta, says: "A *few* years ago your kinsman Gracchus, a name the very echo of patrician nobility, when he held the office of Prefect of the City, did he not upset, break, and burn the Cave of Mithras, and all those monstrous images that served in the initiatory rites, the figures of Corax, Niphus, the Soldier, the Lion, the Persian, Helios, and Father Bromius?"

In the representations here enumerated we recognize symbols constantly occurring upon the monuments under consideration. The raven in Corax; in Niphus, Chneph the lion-headed serpent; the armed man; the lion; the youth in the Persian garb; the sun, expressed either by Sol in his quadriga, or by the eight-rayed star; and Bromius, the *Roarer*, an appropriate epithet of the Grecian Dionysus; the solar deity under his Indian aspect, the Asiatic Phanaces; who appears as a youth invested with the attributes of Apollo and Bacchus. Chiflet's gem (fig. 62) may on good grounds be explained as a picture of these Mithraic initia, and in it all the above-mentioned figures and symbols may be discovered. Two serpents erect form a sort of frame to the composition, at the top of which we see the busts of Sol and Luna face to face, between them an eagle with expanded wings, at the back of each a raven. In the field are two crowned, naked men on horseback, trampling upon two dead bodies; between them a kneeling figure in the attitude of supplication, over whose head appear two stars. Behind each horseman stand two soldiers. In the exergue is set out a table supporting a loaf, a roe (a Bacchic attribute), a chalice, a sword, and something indistinct, but seemingly intended for the wreath spoken of by Tertullian. The reverse of the stone presents a more simple design: two crested serpents (dracones) twined about wands and looking into a cup; two stars over a table resting

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upon a larger vase; and on each side a bow, the ends terminating in serpents' heads. Here, it seems to me, are indicated certain amongst the established trials of courage (the Twelve Degrees, or Tortures, as Suidas terms them) to which the neophyte was subjected, exactly, though in much severer reality, as is the "apprentice" on his admission into a Masonic Lodge amongst ourselves. During this probation, which lasted *forty days*, the neophyte was tested by the four elements: he lay naked a certain number of nights upon the snow, then was scourged for the space of two days. These Twelve Trials are sculptured on the border of the famous Mithraic bas-relief preserved in the museum at Innspruck; and similar scenes are discovered by Von Hammer in certain mysterious carvings still existing in the Templar churches, figured in his elaborate essay of which more anon. In our gem the kneeling candidate is surrounded by all the terrific or mysterious host of Mithras so remorselessly destroyed by the zealous Gracchus. Another circumstance denoted by the two corpses trampled upon by the crowned horsemen refers to one recorded test of the neophyte's courage —the apparent approach of death—for Lampridius mentions, among the other mad freaks of Commodus, that, during the Mithraic ceremonies, where "a certain thing was to be done for the sake of inspiring *terror*, he polluted the rites by a *real murder*:" an expression which clearly shows that a scenic representation of such an act entered into the proceedings.[1] The raven properly takes its place here as an attribute of Apollo, the sun-god of the Hellenic mythology, whence it is often engraved seated on his lyre.

But the doctrines as well as the rites of this religion can be more intelligibly explained as we review certain monuments displaying them either by direct representation or symbolically.

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[1] As in the modern rite, where the candidate, ordered to remove the bandage from his eyes, sees a number of swords pointed in the most threatening manner possible at his naked breast.

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MITHRAIC TALISMANS.

Mithraic gems are for the most part earlier in date than those emanating from the Alexandrian Gnosis, and in no way connected with its doctrines. Little difficulty will be found on inspection in separating the two classes, the former being marked by the superiority of their style, and yet more so by the absence of the Egyptian symbols and the long Coptic legends usually accompanying the latter. Indeed, many of them belong to the best period of Roman art, the age of Hadrian; and it is easy to perceive how the worship of Apollo gradually merged into that of his more spiritual Oriental representative, as the religions of Indian origin began to get the upper hand throughout the Empire—religions essentially speculative, and relating professedly to the matters of the other world and the Invisible, so contrary to the old Western notions, active, materialistic, and concerning themselves only about the Present and the Visible.

According to the constant rule as to the material selected for talismans, the Jasper, green, mottled, or yellow, is almost exclusively employed for the intagli connected with the Mithraic ideas, which take the place of Phœbus and his attributes in the works of the second and third centuries. To judge from their good execution, many of these intagli date even from the time of the first Cæsars, and thus form, as it were, the introduction to the innumerable host of Gnostic gems amidst whose barbarism the glyptic art of the ancients expires. In their origin they spring from the Persian doctrines so widely diffused throughout the Roman world under the Middle Empire, which taught the exclusive worship of the genius of the Sun, the fountain of light and life: a notion philosophically true, if indeed the vital principle be but a form of electricity. As we shall see hereafter, the later Platonists, like Macrobius, laboured hard to make out the multitudinous deities of the old religions, wherever established, to be merely epithets and expressions for the same divinity in his various characters. This they did to accommodate the old-established ideas to the overpowering influence of the Buddhistic theosophy, which taught that the innumerable deities of the

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Hindoo mythology were but names for the energies of the First Triad in its successive avatars or manifestations to the world.

Earliest amongst these designs is the Lion, the Sun's House astrologically speaking, surrounded with stars, holding in his jaws a bull's head; or trampling on the serpent, here the emblem not of wisdom, as formerly, but of the Evil Principle. For in all notions emanating from the East, where poison is the characteristic quality of the serpent-race, this animal has been adopted as the most proper symbol of the Destroyer, whilst in the West, where the race is, for the most part, innocuous, and a mere object of wonder, it ever has symbolized wisdom and eternity (from the popular belief in its yearly renewing its youth by the casting off its slough), hence the attribute of Apollo and Esculapius; and in the Gothic creed binding together the whole universe in its perpetual embrace.

Again, we have Mithras himself, a youth in Persian attire, plunging a dagger, *acinaces*, the national weapon, into the throat of a prostrate bull; the whole surrounded by the sun, and moon, and the signs of the Zodiac. But the most complete representation of Mithraic ideas and symbols that has ever come under my notice is the intaglio figured by Caylus (Rec. vi. Pl. 84). It is engraved on a very fine agate, two inches long by one and a-half wide. In the centre is the usual type of Mithras slaughtering the Bull, whose tail terminates in three wheat-ears, and between his hind legs depends a vast scorpion: beneath is the lion strangling the serpent, creature of darkness and death. On each side is a fir-tree (which in its shape represents a flame[1]), against which are fixed torches, one pointing up, the other down, emblems of the rising and the setting sun. At the side of one is a scorpion, of the other a bull's head. Above each tree again is a torch, pointing each in opposite directions. The principal group is flanked by Apollo in his quadriga, and Diana in her biga. Above the whole stand two winged figures entwined with serpents and leaning upon long sceptres, between whom

[1] A pine-cone was adopted from the most ancient times for the emblem of fire, and therefore appears held by certain Assyrian gods in the earliest sculptures.

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are three flames, besides four more at the side of the right-hand figure, making up the sacred number, seven; or perhaps allusive to the planets. A naked female, surrounded by ten stars, is on her knees before the left-hand winged figure—evidently the soul to be protected by the talisman—praying for purification. Could this elaborate composition be fully interpreted, it would doubtless be found to contain a summary of the Mithraic creed; but the legends preserved in the Zendavesta supply a sufficient explanation of some portions, whilst others derive light from a comparison with larger monuments of the same class. Thus the Bull's tail terminating in wheat-ears expresses the fifty life-giving plants that sprang from the tail of the Primeval Bull[1] when destroyed by Ahriman. The seed of the same animal was carried up by the Izeds (genii) to the moon, where, purified in her beams, it was formed by Ormuzd into a new pair, the parents of all the creatures of earth, air, and water. The scorpion hangs between the hind legs in the part of the body under the influence of that Sign, for Manilius says—

> "The fiery Scorpion in the *groin* delights;"

and in this particular connexion it typifies Autumn, as the serpent lying below does Winter. The reason is thus given by Manilius (iv. 217):—

> "With fiery tail when Scorpio threatens war,
> Whilst through the stars he guides the solar car;
> He searches earth with penetrating rays,
> And the mixed seed deep in her furrows lays."

The Torches raised and lowered signify the East and West. In the round altar of the Villa Borghese (Winck. Mon. Ined. Pl. 21) the bust of Luna appears resting on a crescent above an aged head, in front face, with crab's claws springing out of his forehead; or Oceanus. The bust of the Rising Sun, with his usual symbol, the eight-rayed star, in front, rests upon an elevated flambeau; that of the Setting, looking downwards, rests upon another lowered towards the ground. The serpent winding four

[1] Or "Life" personified; the Zend having but one name for both.

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times around the youth may signify the Sun's annual revolution, a meaning rendered evident by a torso of Mithras found at Arles, in which the Zodiacal signs are placed between the folds of the serpent. The Lion and the Raven stand for the attendant priests; for in these rites the superior officials were styled *Lions;* the inferior, *Ravens;* hence the rites themselves are often designated as *Leontica* and *Coracica.*

The fires, the planets, and the genii presiding over them, are in number *Seven;* a number the most sacred of all amongst the Persians. But of the seven, *three* are constantly represented in an especial manner, as those most anciently adored. These three are, the Fire of the stars, that is the planet Venus, called *Anaid*—the Fire of the sun, or the Fire *Mihr*[1]—the Fire of the lightning, or the Fire *Bersiov*, the planet Jupiter. The worship of the Fire *Gushtasp*, or that of Anahid, figures as a very ancient worship in the Zend books and the Shah Nameh, just as that of Anaitis in a number of Greek authors from Herodotus downwards. Now *Mitra*,[2] the feminine of *Mithras*, and Anahid are one and the same goddess; or the Morning Star, a female genius, presiding over love, giving light, and directing the harmonious movement of the other planets by the sound of her lyre, the strings whereof are the solar rays. "Apollo's lyre, strung with his golden hair" (Creuzer, Rel. de l'Antiq. ii. 731). In this statement we find the reason for the division of the Fires in Caylus's agate into two groups, the principal one consisting of the three most ancient, the subsidiary one of the other four.

In the oft-repeated group of Mithras sacrificing the Bull, his piercing the throat with his dagger signifies the penetration of the solar rays into the bosom of the *earth*, by which action all nature is nourished; the last idea being expressed by the dog licking up the blood as it flows from the wound. The sign Capricorn, so often introduced, denotes the necessity of moisture

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[1] This is the Winged Disk so frequently seen upon the Assyrian cylinders; which type explains the simile of "the Sun of Righteousness with healing *in his wings.*"

[2] Herodotus (i. 131) says that the Persians at first worshipped only the sun, moon, and elements, but had learnt from the Assyrians the worship of Venus Urania, whom they called Mitra, the Mylitta of the Assyrians, the Alitta or Alilat of the Arabians.

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to co-operate with the solar influence in bringing about the germination of the seed sown, whilst the scorpion, in its significant position, above alluded to, typifies the generative heat. Frequently this group is depicted as enclosed by a host of the sacred animals of Egypt, arranged by threes, crocodiles, goats, calves, ibises, hawks, and vultures, standing around in attitudes of adoration, and gazing on the operation of their supreme head, Mithras.

Mithraic bas-reliefs cut on the faces of rocks or on stone tablets still abound in the countries formerly the western provinces of the Roman Empire; many exist in Germany, still more in France, and in this island they have often been discovered, on the line of the Picts' Wall, and the noted one at Bath. Inasmuch as *Bel*, the Semitic Sun-god, was the great divinity of the Druids, it is easy to see what a ready acceptance the worship of his more refined Persian equivalent would find amongst Celtic races when once introduced by the Roman troops and colonists, many of them Orientals.

Though the modern Parsees, like their forefathers in the days of Herodotus, abhor idols and representations of divine things, yet they retain traces of the ideas above expressed in sculpture, in their veneration for the dog, still esteemed by them a sacred animal. Tavernier (i. 493) says of the Guebres at Surat:—"They have another strange custom, when a person is at the point of death, to take a little dog and put it upon his breast. When they perceive he is at his last gasp, they apply the dog's muzzle to the dying man's mouth, and make it bark twice when in this position, as if they meant to make the person's soul enter into the dog, which they pretend will deliver it into the hands of the angel appointed to receive it. Moreover, if a dog happens to die, they carry it out of the town, and pray to God on behalf of this piece of carrion, as though the brute's soul could derive any advantage from their prayers after its death." Following this analogy, it may be conjectured that the dog licking up the bull's flowing blood is intended for the vehicle of departing life. The Parsees at present expose their dead on the summit of a lofty tower, to be devoured by the birds alone; but under the Sassanian monarchy it was the rule to lay them on the ground, to be con-

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sumed by dogs,[1] a mode of funeral they endeavoured to enforce on all conquered nations, for they viewed as sacrilege the placing corpses in the bosom of the earth; still more the consuming them with the sacred element, Fire. This idea seems above all others to have scandalised the narrow-minded Byzantines, the historian Agathias in particular expressing his indignation at the Persian usage of casting their dead to the dogs, whatever their rank, as in the case of the great satrap, Mermeroes, exposed naked in the fields to be so devoured. If the dogs rejected the carcase, this was looked on by the survivors as the worst of omens, and the sure token of the damnation of his soul. The Parsees, who with more decency make the raven (an equally sacred creature) their sexton and sepulchre in one, derive a similar augury from observing which eye is first attacked by the bird, the right being the sign of salvation, the left of the reverse.

There is a talisman, which, from its frequent repetition, would seem to be a badge of some particular degree amongst the initiated, perhaps of the first admission. A man blindfolded, with hands tied behind his back, is bound to a pillar, on which stands a gryphon holding a wheel; the latter a most ancient emblem of the sun. Probably it was in this manner that the candidate was tested by the appearance of imminent death when the *bandage was suddenly removed from his eyes.*[2]

After passing victoriously through the ordeal, the neophyte was *marked* in some indelible manner, the exact nature of which cannot now be ascertained. The expressions of Augustine (In Johan. I. Dis. 7) lead us to conclude two things: first, that the engraved stones we have been considering were given to the candidate on the successful conclusion of his probation, as a token of admission into the brotherhood, and for a means of recognition between its members; and, secondly, that each person, on ad-

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[1] This was carrying out to the fullest extent a very ancient principle. Herodotus states (i. 140) from his own knowledge that the corpse of a Magus could not be buried until it had been attacked by some bird, or a dog; and the same was reported of the other Persians. The Magi also regarded the killing of a dog and a man as equally criminal.

[2] In the example given by Raspe the significant motto, ΔΙΚΑΙΩΣ, "justly," is engraved in the field.

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mission, was marked with a secret mark, stamped in his flesh, and indelible. "Something of the kind has been copied by a *certain spirit*, in that he will have *his own image* purchased with blood, because he knew that mankind were some time or another to be redeemed by the shedding of blood." The last expression shows that this mark was not *burnt* in, but incised or tattooed; and the same conclusion may be drawn from St. John's use of the word χαραγμα, *engraving*, not στιγμα, *brand-mark*, to express the badge of servitude, which all the subjects of the Second Beast "having horns like a lamb's, and speaking like a dragon," were forced to receive either in their right hands (*i. e.* on the palm), or upon their foreheads. The author of the Apocalypse probably had the Mithraicists in view in penning this allegory, yet we may be certain that the members of a *secret* society did not receive the mark of membership on any *conspicuous* part of the body. Here also the same necessity meets us, as in every portion of our subject, for placing the origin of all such sectarian personal marks in India, the true fount either directly or indirectly of all the ideas and practices of Gnosticism. *There* the votaries of the several deities are still distinguished by the proper symbol of their patron-god stamped upon their forehead, but in a milder form, not in blood, but in the ashes of cow dung, the powder of sandal wood, or coloured earths, daily renewed. Inasmuch as with them an equilateral triangle with the apex upwards is the symbol of Fire, it may be conjectured that the Mithraic χαραγμα was the same simple form.[1] But these Hindoo sectarian signs will be fully discussed under the head of "Mason's Marks."

The seven stars so common upon these gems probably have more than a mere allusion to the planets, and may denote the Seven Amshaspands, the highest order in Zoroaster's celestial hierarchy, and the Seven Spirits of God amongst the later Jews, whence the Christians later still obtained their "Septiformis munere" as an epithet of the Spiritus Sanctus. Their names and attributes are, Ormuzd, source of life and creation; Bahman,

[1] Horapollo's statement that such was the Egyptian symbol for the Moon has been already noticed.

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king of the world; Ardibehesht, giver of fire; Shahrivar, of the metals; Sapandomad (the Gnostic Sophia), queen of the Earth; Kordad, presiding over time and the seasons; Amerdad, over trees and plants. Of these the chief are Bahman, Ardibehesht, Shahrivar, and Sapandomad. Below these are the Izeds, twenty-seven in number, presided over by Mithras, who rule the heavenly bodies and the elements. To each Amshaspand and Ized there is a corresponding evil spirit, his constant opponent, or seven Arch-Devs and twenty-seven Devs.

A ROMAN MITHRAS IN HIS CHAPEL.

Flaminius Vacca. No. 117. "I remember there was found in the vineyard of Sig. Orazio Muti (where the treasure was discovered), opposite S. Vitale, an idol in marble, about 5 palms high (3½ ft.), standing erect upon a pedestal in an empty chamber, with the door walled up. Around him were many little lamps in terra-cotta, set with their nozzles towards the idol. This had a lion's head,[1] and the rest of the body that of a man. Under his feet was a globe, whence sprang a serpent which encompassed all the idol, and its head entered into his mouth. He had his hands crossed upon the breast: a key in each, four wings fastened upon the shoulders, two pointing upwards, two downwards. I do not consider it a very antique work, being done in a rude manner; or perhaps it is so ancient that at the time it was made the good style was not yet known. Sig. Orazio, however, told me that a theologian, a Jesuit Father, explained its meaning, saying it signified the Devil, who in the times of heathenism ruled over the world; hence the globe under his feet; the serpent which begirt him and entered into his mouth, his foretelling the future with ambiguous responses; the keys in his hands, his sovereignty over the world; the lion's head, the ruler of all beasts. The wings signified his presence

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[1] This was Jerome's 'Pater Bromius,' the Roarer, a title of Bacchus, who fought under this disguise in the War of the Giants, as Horace describes him:

"Tu cum Parentis regna per arduum
Cohors gigantum scanderet impia
Rhœtum retorsisti *leonis*
Unguibus horribilique mala."

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everywhere. Such was the version given by the aforesaid Father. I have done everything to see the idol, but Sig. Orazio being now dead, his heirs do not know what has become of it. It is not unlikely that by the advice of the theologian, Sig. Orazio may have sent it to some *lime-kiln to cure its dampness*, for it had been buried many and many a year." Thus was this most curious Pantheus destroyed, through the stupidity of a devil-fearing, conceited bigot. 118. "I remember that after the aforesaid idol, in the same place was found another, but in bas-relief, with a lion's head, but the rest of the body a man's; from the girdle downwards clad in a thin veil; having the arms extended, in each hand a torch; with two wings pointing upwards, two downwards, from between which sprung a serpent. At his right, an altar with fire; from the said idol's mouth proceeded a ribbon or scroll, extending over the fire."

SERAPIS.

The next great family of monuments are those connected with the worship of Serapis, that mysterious deity, who under his several forms, during the first and second centuries of the empire, had entirely usurped the honours of his brother Jupiter, and reduced him to the rank of a mere planetary genius. Unlike the generality of the deities who figure on the Gnostic stones, Serapis does not belong to the primitive Egyptian Mythology. His worship was, it may be said, only coeval with the city of Alexandria, into which it was introduced from Sinope by the first Ptolemy, in consequence of the command, and the repeated threats, in case of neglect, of a vision. After three years of fruitless negotiation, Ptolemy at last obtained the statue from Scythotherius, king of Sinope; the citizens refusing to let it go, a report was spread that the god had found his way spontaneously from the temple down to the Egyptian ships in the harbour. The prevalent opinion amongst the Greeks was that it represented *Jupiter Dis* (Aidoneus), and the figure at his side, Proserpine. The latter the Egyptian envoys were ordered by the vision to leave *in situ*. Another story was that the statue had been introduced later, and from Seleucia, by Ptolemy III., but this

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rests on slighter authority. It was Timotheus, an Athenian Eumolpid, and hence by hereditary right royal diviner, who had indicated Pontus as the abode of the unknown divinity that had appeared in a dream to the king, and bid him send to fetch himself without telling where. The figure of the apparition was youthful, which tallies but ill with the majestic maturity of the Sinopic god (Tacitus, Hist. IV., 84). The Helios Dionysus, a veritable *Crishna*, on the reverse of Pharnaces II.'s gold medallion, executed at Sinope in the next century, agrees better with this description.

Speedily did Serapis become the great god of his new home, and speculations as to his nature busied the ingenuity of the philosophers of Alexandria down to the latest times of Paganism; every conflicting religion also endeavouring to claim him as the grand representative of their own idea. Macrobius has preserved one of the most ingenious of these materialistic interpretations (Sat. I., 20). "The city of Alexandria pays an almost frantic worship to Serapis and Isis; yet all this veneration they prove is but offered to the Sun under that title, both by their placing the corn-measure upon his head, and accompanying his statue by the figure of an animal with three heads. Of these, the central and the largest is a lion's; that which rises on the right is a dog's, in a peaceful and fawning attitude; whilst the left part of the neck terminates in the head of a ravening wolf. All these animal forms are connected together by the wreathed body of a serpent, which raises his head up towards the god's right hand, on which side this monster is placed. The lion's head typifies the Present, because its condition between the Past and the Future is strong and fervent. The Past is signified by the wolf's head, because the memory of all things past is snatched away from us and utterly consumed. The symbol of the fawning dog represents the Future, the domain of inconstant and flattering hope. But whom should Past, Present, and Future serve except their author? His head crowned with the *calathus* typifies the height of the planet above us, and his all-powerful capaciousness, since unto him all things earthly return, being drawn up by the heat that he emits. Moreover, when Nicocreon, king of Cyprus, con-

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sulted Serapis as to which of the gods he ought to be held, he thus responded:—

> 'A god I am such as I show to thee,
> The starry Heavens my head, my trunk the Sea,
> Earth forms my feet, mine ears the Air supplies,
> The Sun's far-darting, brilliant rays, mine eyes.'

Hence it is apparent that the nature of Serapis and of the Sun is one and indivisible. Isis, so universally worshipped, is either the Earth, or Nature, as subjected to the Sun. Hence the goddess's body is covered with continuous rows of udders,[1] to show that the universe is maintained by the perpetual nourishment of the Earth or Nature."

All this, however, is but the ingenious refinement of the Alexandrian Greeks, tinctured as it is with the symbolic interpretation peculiar to the New Platonism. It is evident that the god, on his first introduction into Egypt, was regarded as identical with Dis, or Aidoneus, the god of the shades. But his attributes prove him to have been of Indian origin, and no other than *Yama*, "the Lord of Hell," attended by his dog *Cerbaru*, "the Spotted," styled Trikasa, "the three-headed," and his serpent *Sesha*.[2] His name is but the Grecised form of one of Yama's titles, *Ser-adah*, "Lord of the Obsequies" or sacrifices (Sradah) made to the Piri or Manes. Yama, also, is the "Lord of Souls," and the "Judge of the Dead," another character assimilating him to Serapis in the light in which the latter came to be subsequently regarded; a point to be treated of in its fitting place. There is also a derivation of the name Serapis from another of Yama's titles, *Sri-pa*, "the Blood-drinker," and on some accounts a preferable one. It is supported by Homer's old tradition as to Ulysses' mode of evoking the ghosts, and their eagerness to lap the victim's blood (Od. xi., 35).

> ——— τα δε μηλα λαβων απεδειροτομησα
> ες βοθρον ρεε δ'αιμα μελαινεφες αι δ'αγεροντο
> ψυχαι υπ' εξ Ερεβου νεκυων κατατεθνηωτων.

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[1] It appears from this that Macrobius regarded Isis and the Ephesian Diana as one and the same; for the ancient Egyptian goddess had merely the proper complement of a woman.

[2] Entitled "the Regent of Hell."

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THE GNOSTIC GORGON.

(Bellermann's Achamoth.)

From a cast: actual size. Byzantine legend for + **Αγιος αγιος κοας φαωθ ωσανας τοις υψιστοις ευλογημενος.**

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Yama, as Sradah-deva monarch of Patala, the infernal regions, has for his consort Bhavāni, here entitled Patala-devi. On the earth she is Bhu-devi, in heaven Swar-devi. Besides Cerbaru he owns another dog, *Syamu* "the Black one" (now we see why the medieval familiar spirit, like the famous one of Cornelius Agrippa's, chose this form to appear in).[1] As the Judge of Souls he displays two countenances, the one benign, the other terrific. Another of his titles is Kal-antika or Destroyer of Time: it can hardly be a mere accidental coincidence that καλαντικα should be the name given to the head-dress worn by the Egyptian priests when officiating; in later times a purple cloth covering the head and falling down the neck, and surmounted by two plumes. Kali-Bhavani, the Destructive Female Principle, is represented in this her character with a head exactly agreeing with the original and most ancient type of the Grecian Gorgon, such as we see it still guarding the Etruscan sepulchres, as in the notable example the tomb of the Volumni, Perugia.[2] Formed of a tiger's head in the first conception, it exhibits the same protruded tongue, glaring eyes, huge tusks, wings in the hair, and asps twining about the throat. Be it remembered that in the legend Perseus brings back this trophy from *Ethiopia*, or the farthest East; it was only in Roman times that the name Ethiopia became confined to a region of Africa. His weapon, too, the harpè, the gift of Hermes (Buddha), is precisely in form the *changra* or elephant-hook, an attribute borne by so many Hindoo divinities. Even Phidias retained the original type of the Gorgon, softened down it is true; the Medusa's head, the expression of expiring voluptuous Beauty, does not appear till after the times of Praxiteles, perhaps its first creator. Sufficient explanation here why Perse-

[1] Not to mention Faustus's "pudel."

[2] Where it forms the centre of the ceiling of the larger chamber. It was taken also for the type of several coinages at Populonia, Paros, &c. Lucian says it was an amulet against the Evil Eye: what could be more potent than the face of the Queen of Hell?

In that most ancient monument of Greek art, the Coffer of Cypselus (made before B.C. 660), "behind Polynices stands a female having teeth as fierce-looking as a wild beast's, and the nails of her fingers like unto talons; the inscription over her, *they say*, means Ker (Fate)" (Pausan. v. 19). Her name, therefore, must have been a foreign word, translated to Pausanias by the custodian of the temple.

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phoneia (Destroyer—Slayer) should be assigned by the oldest Greeks as the partner of Aidoneus, and also why Ulysses should have feared,—

μη μοι Γοργειην κεφαλην δεινοιο πελωρου
εξ Αιδος πεμψειεν αγαυη Περσεφονεια.

In the second century the syncretistic sects that had sprung up in Alexandria, the very hot-bed of Gnosticism, found out in Serapis a prophetic type of Christ as the Lord and Creator of all, and Judge of the living and the dead. For the response to Nicocreon shows that the philosophers at least understood by Serapis nothing more than the "Anima Mundi," that spirit of whom universal Nature was the body, holding the doctrine of the—

"One harmonious whole
Whose body Nature is, and God the soul."

Thus at length Serapis had become merely the idea of the Supreme Being, whose manifestation upon Earth was the Christ. In this manner are we to understand the curious letter of Hadrian to his friend Servianus, preserved by Vopiscus (Vita Saturnini): "Those who worship Serapis are also Christians; even those who style themselves the bishops of Christ are devoted to Serapis. The very Patriarch himself, when he comes to Egypt, is forced by some to adore Serapis, by others to adore Christ. There is but one God for them all; him do the Christians, him do the Jews, him do all, the Gentiles also worship." There can be no doubt that the head of Serapis, marked as the face is by a grave and pensive majesty, supplied the first idea for the conventional portraits of the Saviour. The Jewish prejudices of the first converts were so powerful that we may be sure no attempt was made to depict His countenance until some generations after all that had beheld it on earth had passed away. Nevertheless the importance so long attached to the pretended letter of Lentulus to the Roman Senate, describing his personal appearance, induces me to insert a literal translation of the chief part thereof, although its monkish Latinity clearly stamps it for a clumsy forgery of some medieval divine; yet, incredible as it may seem, a learned man like Grynæus has been

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so dazzled by his pious desire for its authenticity [1] as to persuade himself that Lentulus, a Senator and a distinguished historian, could have written in the exact phraseology of a Franciscan preacher. "Lentulus, governor of the people of Jerusalem, to the Senate and Roman People, greeting. There has appeared in our times, and still exists, a Man of great virtue named Christ Jesus, who is called by the Gentiles a 'Prophet of Truth,' whom his own disciples call the 'Son of God;' raising the dead, and healing diseases. A man, indeed, of lofty stature, handsome, having a venerable countenance, which the beholders can both love and fear. His hair verily somewhat wavy and curling, somewhat brightish and resplendent in its colour, flowing down upon his shoulders, having a parting in the middle of the head after the fashion of the Nazarenes. A forehead flat and full of calmness, without wrinkle or any blemish, which a slight tinge of red adorns. The nose and mouth beyond all blame. Having a beard full and ruddy, of the colour of his hair, not long, but forked; his eyes quick (variis) and brilliant. In reproof terrible," &c. (Grynæus, Orthodoxia, vol. i. p. 2.)

The colossal statue of Serapis was formed out of plates of *different* metals [2] artfully joined together, and placed in a shrine crowning the summit of an artificial hill ascended by a hundred steps; [3] a style of temple totally different from the native Egyptian or Grecian model, but exactly agreeing with that of the Hindoo pagoda, as the famous one of Siva at Tanjore. The popular belief was that to profane this statue would be the signal for heaven and earth to fall into their original chaos; a notion bear-

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[1] Pliny justly observes, "Pariunt desideria non traditos vultus sicut in Homero evenit." The wish is father to the portrait of the venerated object; and the offspring is gladly accepted by the loving soul without too closely scrutinizing its legitimacy; for Martial is right in saying—

"Quis enim damnat sua vota libenter?"

[2] This statue probably suggested to the Alexandrian Jew who wrote the Book of Daniel the idea of the similarly composed image in Nebuchadnezzar's Dream; for his description must have been penned long after the coming of Serapis from Pontus, as is evident from the author's minute details respecting the constant wars between Antiochus Epiphanes and Ptolemy Philometor, and the final intervention of the Roman Senate.

[3] The vast interior was divided into vaulted halls, containing the Alexandrian Library.

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ing testimony to what was the idea this idol embodied. Finally, however, though his worship had been tolerated long after that of the other gods of Egypt was abolished, this wonderful colossus was broken to pieces by "that perpetual enemy of peace and virtue" the Archbishop Theophilus, in the reign of Theodosius.

Like that of Mithras, the worship of Serapis was widely diffused in the West. Ammian remarks (xvi. 12) that Mederich, king of the Alamanni, had learnt, when a hostage in Gaul, certain Greek mysteries, and had in consequence changed the name of his son Agenarich into *Serapio*.

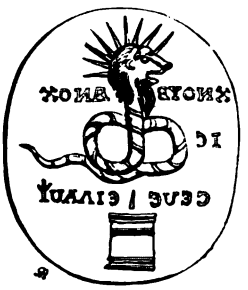
MONUMENTS OF THE SERAPIS WORSHIP.

Innumerable are the statues, bas-reliefs, and gems, many of them in the finest style of Roman art, connected with the worship of Serapis, a thing to be expected with regard to a divinity whose idea involved the two most powerful principles that actuate the conduct of mankind—the love of riches and the fear of death. For the god of the subterranean world is lord also of its treasures; and thus we find an altar dedicated to Pluto as "Jovi Custodi et genio thesaurorum" (Winck. P. G. p. 83). Pluto is also known by the title of Jupiter Stygius.

Of the gems serving for talismans, very common is the bust of Serapis with the legend, either in full or abbreviated, ΕΙC[1] ΘΕΟC CAPAΠIC, or Ε.Θ.C., "there is but one God, and he is Serapis"—ΕΙC ZΩN ΘΕΟC, "The One Living God." Often the intention of the amulet is expressed, as ΝΙΚΑ Ο CAPAΠIC TON ΦΘONON, "Baffle the Evil Eye, O Serapis!" or in the singular example given by Caylus, where the god stands accompanied by Venus, and the legend ΚΑΤΑ ΧΡΗΜΑΤΙCΜΟΝ. "By divine command," testifies that this type had been engraved in consequence of a vision or oracular intimation. Around his bust, on a jasper in the former Praun

[1] What was understood by the name Serapis is most fully set forth in Raspe's stone, No. 1490: ΕΙC ΖΕVC CAPAΠIC AΓION ONOMA CABAW ΦWC ΑΝΑΤΟΛΗ ΧΘWΝ. "The sole Jupiter, Serapis, Holy Name, Glory, Light, the Day-Spring, the Earth."

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12.



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10.



13.



13.

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Cabinet (convincing attestation of his supremacy), we find the prayer ΦΥΛΑCCΕ ΔΙΑ, "Protect Jupiter," now, alas! merely a benignant horoscope. Such invocations bear the unmistakeable stamp of the age when the old liberal Western mythology, that had pictured Heaven as a well ordered monarchy, peopled by innumerable deities, each having his proper and independent position, was beginning to give place to the gloomy superstitions of Syria, which taught that the tutelary divinity of each particular nation or sect was the sole god of heaven and earth, and condemned those of all other races as mere deceivers and evil spirits.

There are, however, many gems, fine both in material and workmanship, that give us the primitive Egyptian gods exactly as they appear in the most ancient monuments, but engraved in the purely Roman manner. Most of these must be referred to the times of Hadrian, who zealously strove to reanimate the forms of that old religion, whose spirit had long since passed away, and under whose patronage the creed of the Pharaohs blazed up for a moment with a bright, but factitious lustre, a phenomenon often preceding the final extinction of a long established religion.

To this period belongs a beautiful sard in my collection, representing Serapis seated with his attributes, as Macrobius had seen him, whilst before him *stands* Isis holding in one hand the sistrum, in the other a wheat-sheaf, with the legend Η ΚΥΡΙΑ ΙCΙC ΑΓΝΗ, "Immaculate is our lady Isis," the very terms applied afterwards to that personage who succeeded to her form, titles,[1] symbols, rites, and ceremonies, even with less variation than in the interchange above alluded to. Thus her devotees carried into the new priesthood the former badges of their profession, the obligation to celibacy, the tonsure, and the surplice, omitting unfortunately the frequent ablutions prescribed by the ancient creed. The sacred image still moves in procession as when Juvenal laughed at it (vi. 530)—

[1] The "Black Virgins," so highly reverenced in certain French cathedrals during the long night of the Middle Ages, proved, when at last examined critically, basalt figures of Isis.

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——— grege linigero circumdatus et grege calvo.
"Escorted by the tonsured surpliced train."

Her proper title, Domina, the exact translation of the Sanscrit *Isi*, survives, with slight change, in the modern Madonna.[1] By a singular permutation, the flower borne by each, the lotus, ancient emblem of the Sun and fecundity, now renamed the lily, is interpreted as significant of the opposite quality. The tinkling sistrum, a sound so well pleasing to the Egyptian goddess, is replaced by that most hideous of noises the clattering bell. The latter instrument, however, came directly from the Buddhist religious usages, where it forms as essential an element as of yore in early Celtic Christianity, when the holy bell was the actual type of the Godhead to the new converts. The bell in its present form was unknown to the ancients; its normal shape is Indian, and the first real bell-founders were the Buddhist Chinese. Again, relic-worship (for a fragment of the bone of a Buddha is indispensable in the founding of a *Dagobah*, or temple of that faith) seems from the third century to have been virtually the prevalent form of Christianity in the East.

It is astonishing how much of the Egyptian and the second-hand Indian symbolism passed over into the usages of following times. Thus the high cap and hooked staff of the god became the bishop's mitre and crosier; the term *Nun* is purely Egyptian, and bore its present meaning; the erect oval, symbol of the Female Principle of Nature, became the Vesica Piscis, and a frame for divine things; the Crux Ansata, testifying the union of the Male and Female Principle in the most obvious manner, and denoting fecundity and abundance, as borne in the god's hand, is transformed, by a simple inversion, into the Orb surmounted by the Cross, and the ensign of royalty.

GNOSTICISM, ALEXANDRIAN AND SYRIAN.

The grand development of the old Egyptian doctrines in a new phase is most conspicuous in that very extensive class of

[1] Mater-Domina.

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engraved stones popularly termed Abraxas, Basilidan, or Gnostic gems, almost the sole productions of the expiring Glyptic art in the last centuries of the Western Empire. Contrary to the received notion, a careful study of their numerous subdivisions has convinced me that but a small portion of their number present any trace of Christian doctrines, but rather that they are the fruit of notions that had flourished long before the first dawn of Christianity. An important portion connected with the primitive Egyptian mythology have more connexion with magic and medicine than with religion; and seeing that their employment claims a much higher antiquity than the next grand division, the genuine Abraxas stones, the date of whose origin is exactly known, this subject will be best approached by our first considering the talismans which present the Agathodæmon, Chnuphis, or Chneph, formerly called Dracontiae, and erroneously attributed to the Ophites, a semi-Christian sect, as their first inventors.

AGATHODÆMON TALISMANS.

The Agathodæmon, or good genius, whose very title furnishes the reason why he was chosen to figure on a talisman designed to protect the wearer from disease and mischance, is depicted as a huge serpent having the head of a lion surrounded by *seven* or *twelve* rays, indicating that he is but one form of the idea of the Sun-god. This figure always is accompanied by its name, variously spelt as **XNOYMIC**, **XNOYΦIC**, or **XNOYBIC**, which Salmasius (De An. Clin.) understands as forms of the Coptic **XNOYB** *gold*, for the sound of the letter B was as great a stumbling-block to the ancient as it is still to the modern Greeks. Hence Salmasius explains another title sometimes found, **XOΛ-XNOYBIC**, as "all golden." Jablonsky, however, derives the name from **XNOYM**, *good*, and **IC**, *spirit*, and so makes Agathodæmon to be the literal rendering of the name.[1] Over the seven

[1] I have seen a large sard, worked in the coarse Roman Egyptian style of Diocletian's age, engraved with two imperial busts *regardant*, and on the reverse the Chnuphis-serpent, with the legend in *Roman* letters,

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rays of the lion's crown, and on the point of each, stands a vowel of the seven in the Greek alphabet **AEHIOYΩ**, expressing the seven heavens, a notion on which more shall be given in detail in its fitting place. Almost invariably the back of such a gem bears a peculiar symbol like the letter **S** or **Z** thrice repeated, and traversed by a bar through their middle, the purport of which cannot be more than conjectured. That this type of the good genius was not merely pre-Christian, but also of the extremest antiquity in its application as an amulet, appears from the notice of it by Galen (De Simp. Med. b. ix.). "Some indeed assert that a virtue of this kind is inherent in certain stones, such as is in reality possessed by the Green Jasper, which benefits the chest and mouth of the stomach, if tied upon them. Some indeed set the stone in a ring, and engrave upon it a serpent with his head crowned with rays, according as is prescribed by King Nechepsos in his thirteenth book. Of this material I have had ample experience, having made a necklace out of such stones, and hung it round the patient's neck, descending low enough for the stones to touch the mouth of the stomach, and they proved to be of no less benefit thus than if they had been engraved in the manner laid down by King Nechepsos." This treatise of Nechepsos must have been a regular manual for the use of magicians, for Ausonius says,

> "Quique magos docuit mysteria vana Nechepsi;"
>
> Nechepsi, founder of vain magic's art;

and doubtless the source of the notions concerning sigils preserved to us only in the medieval lapidaria. Pliny (vii. 50) quotes him with Petosiris as an astrological authority, according

---

AGATHODAEMON, the sole instance known to me of such an amulet with a Latin inscription.

The Cynocephalus, or Baboon, the sacred animal of Hermes or Thoth, the Scribe of the Gods, appears performing his devotions in front of a column crowned by a triangle, and covered over with letters; evidently representing those "Pillars of Hermes," out of which Jamblichus solved all the questions of Porphyrius (Jam. De Myst. II.). In classical Greek the original Cneph becomes *Canopus*, and the Canopic Vase is often figured with two serpents as heraldic supporters. But of the centuries so fruitful in the Chnuphis serpent intagli, no more Canopic Vases are seen on the gems.

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to whose rule of the *Tetartemorion* (derived from the place of three signs, or trine), the possible extent of human life in the region of Italy was 124 years. Here it may be observed, and the fact will be of service in a subsequent inquiry, that Pliny (xxx. 2) mentions a second science of magic, more recent by many thousand years than Zoroaster's, founded by the Jews Moses, Jannes, and Jotapes. The first of the trio may have been the Talmudist, whose "secret volume" Juvenal alludes to,

"Tradidit arcano quæcunque volumine Moses."

From the same author we find that race retaining their ancient reputation for deep skill in interpreting dreams — nay more, "wiser than Daniel," they now produced them to order:

"Qualiacunque voles Judæi somnia vendunt."

The Jew for money sends what dreams you will.

But to return to the type we are considering, a primitive testimony as to its nature and signification is afforded by the tradition preserved by Eusebius (i. 7). "The serpent, unless injured by violence, never dies naturally, whence the Phœnicians have named it the good genius. Similarly the Egyptians have called him Chneph, and given him a hawk's head, on account of the special swiftness of that bird." The priest at Epeae, entitled the "Head-Interpreter of Sacred Things, and Scribe," has thus explained the meaning of the allegory:—"The most divine nature of all was one serpent, bearing the face of a hawk, and also most delightful in aspect; for when he opened his eyes, he filled all the places of his native region with light, but when he closed them, darkness immediately ensued." Our serpent on the gems, however, does not appear invested with a hawk's head, but always with a lion's; for which reason this legend seems rather to relate to the Abraxas figure sometimes represented with a hawk's or lion's head, instead of a cock's, his customary attribute. The idea is more fully expressed in the design occasionally to be met with, the lion-headed man, or Mithraic priest, grasping a wand entwined with a serpent whose radiated head is directed towards his eyes, seeming to imbibe their radiance. The intention

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is clearly denoted by the Chaldee legend so frequently annexed, ϹΕΜΕϹ ΕΙΛΑΜ, "the Eternal Sun." This title I have seen in a single instance (Marl. Coll.) applied to the usual type of Sol, as he appears when bearing his Roman style of *Sol Invictus Comes*.

To return to the supposed virtues of this amulet (which is always cut in Plasma,[1] the Jasper *par excellence* of the ancients, or in calcedony, tinged with a slight shade of green), the astrologer Hephæstion states that ΧΝΟΥΜΙϹ is one of the Decani or three chief stars in Cancer; and another says it is placed in the breast of Leo, and therefore its influence is good against all diseases of the chest in man. In fact we find the prayer ΦΥΛΑϹϹΕ ΥΓΙΗ ϹΤΟΜΑΧΟΝ[2] ΠΡΟΚΛΟΥ engraved on the back of a Chnuphis gem, in conformity to this belief. Again, many such present a long and varying formula in Coptic, but ending in the title, more or less changed in the spelling, of ΓΙΓΑΝΤΟΡΗΚΤΑ or ΠΑΗΚΤΑ, "Beater or Mocker of the Giants"—that is, of the evil and rebellious spirits—the ancient fable of the War of the Giants against Jove being interpreted according to the Zoroastrian creed of the contest of Ahriman and his angels against Ormuzd, the Power of Good.

The symbol already noticed, the triple S upon a bar, must have been an essential part of a Chnuphis amulet, seeing that it always occupies the reverse. What it represents, and what its purpose, has never been explained; it formerly, however, struck me that it may have been a letter of the Assyrian cuneiform alphabet, to one of which it bears a strong resemblance. But now I am more inclined to suspect that this device has the same origin as the serpent-entwined club of Esculapius, itself so hard to account for. In many examples the SSS take the form of a spiral winding thrice around the rod in their middle. The medical potency also ascribed to the latter symbol of itself points out an analogy in signification to the distinctive attribute of the god of the healing art. Thus in the age of Marcellus Empiricus, the fourth century, it had obtained a place in the pharmacopeia (probably in accordance with Nechepsos' rule not fully trans-

[1] Green calcedony.

[2] Keep in health Proclus' chest!

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cribed by Galen), for he recommends the physician to engrave this sigil on a cerulean jasper,[1] and hang it round the neck of any one suffering from pleurisy, adding, "You will obtain marvellous results." Whether this promise be true or not, marvellous has been the vitality of the symbol; for, reduced to a double S thus traversed by a bar, it became a favourite device in the times of chivalry, being received as the rebus of the word *Fermesse* (SS fermés)—that is, the emblem of constancy. Here then in this Gnostic sigil is to be found the true origin of the SS in the collar of the Garter, formerly styled the "Collar of SS," rather than in the popular explanation that the letters are but the initials of Edward IV.'s motto "Souverayne," a prince posterior by a whole century to the institution of *the Order* and its insignia.

ABRAXAS GEMS, PROPERLY SO CALLED.[2]

Clemens Alexandrinus lived in the same city and same age as Basilides, the reputed founder of the Abraxas religion. For some years of that period they were contemporaries, and it is more than probable that Clemens was personally acquainted with Basilides, he being a very remarkable personage of his times. Hence his testimony to the character of his philosophy deserves more reliance than that of later writers; and at the same time he passes a more judicious as well as a more favourable judgment upon its character. He describes his religion as consisting in a perpetual attention to the soul, and an intercourse with the Deity as the fount of universal love. Again he has, "The Basilidan creed consists of two parts; the first busies itself with divine things, and considers what is the First Cause, *through* which all, and *without* which nothing is made; of what constitution the things are that pervade or include each other; what forces exist in nature, and whereunto they tend. The other part extends to things human; as to what is man, what is consistent or inconsistent with his nature; what he must do and suffer." In this

[1] The sapphirine calcedony; the serpent's proper vehicle being, as just observed, the green species in its various shades.

[2] For much of this chapter I am indebted to Bellermann.

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department he investigates virtue and vice, "what is good, what is evil, and what is indifferent." In short we have here a brief but exact description of a Buddhist missionary. The amiable visionary Clemens, whose own Christianity was but grafted upon the congenial stock of his original Platonism, saw nothing to blame in the transcendental speculations of Basilides. In his eyes he was not a heretic, *i. e.* an innovator as regards the doctrines of the Christian Church, but a mere theosophic philosopher, who sought to express ancient truths under new forms, and perhaps to combine them with the new faith, the truth of which he could admit without necessarily renouncing the old; exactly as is the case with the learned Hindoos of our day.

Far different is the picture of him drawn by the pen of bigoted orthodoxy in the following century, after his theories had been taken up and exaggerated to a monstrous precision by the swarms of semi-Christian sects that sprang up in the very bosom of the Church. These notices are subjoined in their chronological order, for they give in a few words the main features of his system. Tertullian (Præscript.) writes:—"After this Basilides the heretic broke loose. He asserted that there is a supreme God, by name Abraxas, by whom Mind was created, whom the Greeks call *Nous*. From her emanated the Word; from the Word, Providence; from Providence, Virtue and Wisdom; from these two again, Virtues, Principalities, and Powers were made; thence infinite productions and emissions of angels. By these angels 365 heavens were created. Amongst the lowest angels, indeed, and those that made this world, he sets last of all the god of the Jews, whom he denies to be God himself, affirming that he is but one of the angels." That the name Abraxas properly referred to the Sun-god, or Mithras, appears from Jerome (Amos III.) "as Basilides, who called Almighty God by the portentous name of Abraxas, and says that the same word, according to the Greek numerals, and the sum of his annual revolutions, are contained in the circle of the sun, whom the heathen, taking the same sum, but expressed in different numerical letters, call Mithras, and whom the simple Iberians worship under the names of Balsamus[1]

[1] Balsamus is a corruption of Bal-samen, the Lord of Heaven.

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(the Lord of heaven), and Barbelus (Son of the Lord)." This calculation is thus explained by Augustine:—"Basilides pretended the number of heavens is 365, the number of the days in the year. Hence he used to glorify a 'Holy Name,'[1] as it were, that is, the word Abraxas, the letters in which name, according to the Greek mode of computation, make up that number."

The system of emanations, as it was elaborated by Valentinus, has been already considered; suffice it here to repeat that the entire theory is Hindoo, for in their mythology each manifestation of the One Supreme, regarded by the vulgar as a distinct deity, has a female partner, the exact counterpart of himself, through whom, as an instrument, he exerts his power; hence this female is called his *Durga*, or active *Virtue*.[2] To find out a mystery in the value of the letters making up a name is the grand science of the Kabala, examples of which have been adduced above. Although this science is commonly supposed to be peculiar to the Jewish Talmudists, there is no doubt that very uninventive nation borrowed the idea from a foreign source, and that, the Chaldeans, the founders of the magic art. The earliest instance extant of such a mode of expressing a name is St. John's "Number of the Beast," or 666. Although this has supplied good Protestants like Bishop Newton with an effective weapon—in their estimation—against the Pope, after the number has been worked out into its equivalents ΛΑΤΕΙΝΟΣ, letters which, as numerals, make up the sum required, yet there can be little doubt it was actually intended to designate some arch-heretic of the times, then peculiarly obnoxious to the author of the vision. But the titles *Iao* and *Abraxas*, and several others, instead of being recent Gnostic figments were indeed holy names, borrowed from the most ancient formulæ of the East. Pliny must allude to them when he mentions the virtues ascribed by the Magi to amethysts engraved with the names of the Sun and Moon; names, one may be certain from the nationality of his authorities, not expressed in either the Greek or Latin tongue. In the "Eternal Sun," the "Abraxas," the "Adonai," of these

[1] An evident allusion to the primary meaning of the word.

[2] A term actually found in the foregoing list of Emanations.

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gems we recognise the very amulets ridiculed by the philosophic Pliny.

The later Greeks, upon the axiom that "things equal to the same thing are equal to one another," found the holy number, 365, in many sacred names, and thus established the identity of the several personages with one another. Thus the same sum is obtained by adding up the numeral letters in the name ΧΡΕΙΣΤΟΣ, ΜΕΙΘΡΑΣ, and ΑΒΡΑΞΑΣ. The last word has also the great recommendation of meaning in Coptic "Holy-Name," as Bellermann has clearly established. This same value was also detected in other sacred appellations; for instance, Heliodorus (*Æthiop.* ix. 22) finds it in ΝΕΙΛΟΣ, the river,[1] the oldest of the Egyptian gods—though in fact the name merely indicates the *blue* (Nila)[2] colour of his waters—"entitled *Horus*, the father and creator of Lower Egypt."

It is now time to consider that figure the invention of which, as the embodiment of his doctrine, has been assigned to Basilides himself; and with good grounds, for it is certain that it is not to be found on any monument executed in a style anterior to his times, the beginning of the first century. This figure, which has given a name to the entire family, is the god *Abraxas*;[3] or, as it reads on the gems almost invariably, *Abrasax*. The Coptic sense of this title, and its numerical value in Greek, have already been stated. In the latter point of view it also expressed[4] the 365 æons, or emanations of the First Great Cause, which, embracing all within itself, is therefore styled the *Pleroma*; an idea aptly embodied in a name containing the collective number of its components. To show this, the god is a *Pantheus*, or a combination of many attributes, expressing the amalgamation of several ideas into one and the same form. He is depicted with the head of a cock, sacred to Phœbus, or of a lion, symbol of Mithras; his body, human, clad in a cuirass, indicates his guar-

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[1] "In Nilo cujus est aqua mari similis," says Pliny (35, 36), speaking of a painting by Nealces, of a naval fight upon that river.

[2] Which was created by the alluvial soil he brought down.

[3] The Latin writers, to suit the genius of their tongue, thus transposed the final letters.

[4] And probably suggested the precise number of them.

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dian power;[1] his legs are the asp's,[2] types of the Agathodæmon; in his right he wields the scourge, the Egyptian badge of sovereignty, on the left a shield, usually emblazoned with some mystic word, which, like his cuirass, denotes his perpetual warfare with the powers of darkness. On the talisman is always engraved his proper name, ΙΑΩ, with his titles, ΑΒΡΑΣΑΞ and ΣΑΒΑΩΘ, often accompanied by invocations, as, ϹЄΜЄϹ ЄΙΛΑΜ, "Eternal Sun;" ΑΒΛΑΝΑΘΑΒΛΑ, "Thou art our Father;" ΑΔΟΝΑΙ,[3] "The Lord." In this design other relations with ancient ideas of the sun-god are readily to be discovered. Thus Phœbus, as the god of day, is similarly furnished with a whip; and the serpent symbolized the sun's winding course through the zodiac.

THE GOD ABRAXAS, HOW FIGURED ACCORDING TO THE FATHERS.

That the Pantheus upon our gems was actually intended to symbolize the nature of the deity styled Abraxas is also established by the indirect evidence of many writers. Irenæus (23) notices that the Basilidans gave names to their images of pretended angels. Tertullian (Apol. 16) laughing at the god of the heretics as "biforme numen,"[4] that is, a composite figure of man and beast, goes on to say, "they have taken unto themselves gods with wings, or with the heads of dogs, or of lions, or *serpents from the legs downwards*," an evident allusion to the Mithraic, the Egyptian types so common on these talismans, and, in his last expressions, to our serpent-legged monster. Epiphanius, after stating that Basilides asserted that the Supreme Force, the Primal Being—out of whom proceeded Mind, Intelligence, Providence, Strength, and Wisdom—was called Abrasax, proceeds to describe

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[1] He is a Virtue Militant: compare the simile of "putting on the whole armour of God."

[2] On the coffer of Cypselus Boreas was figured with serpents for legs; to indicate, perhaps, his swiftness.

[3] Adonai is the Syrian epithet of the Sun; hence Adonis, or Thammuz, the sun at the winter solstice.

[4] In allusion to the serpent-legs; Biformes being a classical synonym for the *Giants* "anguigenæ" themselves.

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how that idea was embodied by this heresiarch. "Having taken their vain speculations he and his sect have converted them into a peculiar and *definite form* as a foundation for their own erroneous idolatrous and fictitious doctrines." Further on he adds, "with respect to their *Kavlacav*, what person of understanding would not laugh at their converting a Hebrew word into a *bodily shape* expressing their idol; at their figures; at their personified Principalities; in a word, at their fondness for *images?* whilst by these fancies they sow error in the minds of the ignorant for the dissemination of their disgraceful and lying trade." Then, proceeding to the analysis of the type itself, he exclaims, "it is a spirit of deceit, which, like the playing upon a pipe, leads the ignorant into many sins against the truth. Yea, *even his legs* are an imitation of the *serpent*, through whom the Evil One spake and deceived Eve. For after the pattern of that form has the flute been invented, for the deceiving of mankind. Observe the figure that the player makes in blowing his flute. Does he not bend himself up and down, to the right and to the left, like unto them? These forms hath the Devil used to manifest his blasphemy against things heavenly, to destroy with destruction things upon earth, to encompass the world, capturing right and left such as lend an ear to his seductions."

THE NAME IAO.

Having already shown the identity of Abraxas with Mithras, as syllables of the same numerical value, if we examine the exact meaning of the name Iao we shall find this also but a synonym for the latter deity. Macrobius (Book I.) records, that Apollo of Claros being consulted as to which of the gods the one called Ιαος was to be regarded, delivered the following oracle:—

> "The joyous rites ye have learnt to none disclose;
> Falsehood small wit, weak understanding, shows:
> Regard *Iaos* as supreme above,
> In winter, Pluto; in spring's opening, Jove:
> Phœbus through blazing summer rules the day,
> Whilst autumn owns the mild Iao's sway."

Here we find Iao explained as one of the names of the Supreme

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Being whose physical representative is the sun. Again, we have Dionysus (Bacchus) added to the list of synonyms by Orpheus, who sings—

"Jove, Pluto, Phœbus, Bacchus, all are one." [1]

Such a recognition of the grand principle of Hinduism—that all the different deities are but names for the different attributes of the One—is expressed on a curious talisman, formerly in the Herz Collection, allusive also to the tri-une nature of the Creator typified by the Sun-god. It is a *heart*-shaped piece of basalt, engraved on one side with seated figures of Ammon and Ra, or Phre (the Greek Zeus and Helios), and, standing erect between, the sacred Asp. On the other side is the invocation—

Εις Βαιτ, εις Αθωρ, μια των βια, εις δε Αχωρι.
χαιρε Πατερ κοσμου, χαιρε τριμορφε Θεος!

"One Bait, one Athor, one their power, Achori.
Hail father of the world, hail triformed god!"

Concerning the three figures, a word is necessary in explanation of their titles. As to the hawk-headed Ra, Horapollo states that "the *Hawk* stands for the Supreme Intelligence, or the intelligent soul. The hawk was called in the Egyptian language *Baieth*, from *Bai*, the soul, and *Eth*, the heart; which organ they considered the seat or the inclosure of the soul." A sufficient explanation this of the shape given to the talisman. *Achoreus*, the virtuous priest-councillor of the last Ptolemy in Lucan, derives his name from the sacred serpent. We have seen that Iao is but an epithet of the Sun in his autumnal quarter. In the philosophical expositions of the ancient mythology the latter was identical with Bacchus. We need only refer to Virgil's well-known apostrophe—

——— "Vos O clarissima mundi
Lumina, labentem qui cœlo ducitis annum
Liber et alma Ceres!"

[1] Εις Ζευς, εις Αδης, εις Ηλιος, εις Διονυσος. An oracle quoted by Julian substitutes Serapis for the last:

Εις Ζευς, εις Αδης, εις Ηλιος εστι Σεραπις.
"One Jove, one Sun, one Pluto, is Serapis."

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where Bacchus and Ceres stand for Osiris and Isis, the Sun and Moon. Hence Bacchus often is represented with horns.

"Accedant capiti cornua, *Bacchus* eris,"

says Sappho to Phaon. For in Hebrew a "radiated" and a "horned" head is signified by the same word. Hence, when Moses came down from the Mount—"cornuta fuit facies ejus," according to the Vulgate; and in virtue of this mistranslation hath the Lawgiver ever been graced with those appendages in Catholic iconology.

In this title undoubtedly lies the origin of the persuasion of the ancients that the Jewish Jehovah—a sound expressed in Greek letters by IAΩ[1]—was no other than the Egyptian Bacchus; a notion supported, in their view, by the golden vines that formed the sole visible decoration of the Temple, the "blowing up the trumpets at the new moon," and the custom of holding the Feast of Tabernacles in huts made out of leafy boughs, and accompanied with many of the ceremonies used at the Greek Dionysia. This opinion as to the real origin of the Jewish worship is mentioned by Tacitus (Hist. v. 5)[2] as the prevalent one amongst the learned of his day, although he does not agree in it; albeit his dissent is grounded solely on the fact that the gloomy and morose character of the Jewish religion seemed to disprove

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[1] Diod. Sic. (i. 94) records that the Godhead was named by Moses IAΩ, and hence came the word *Jovis*. Clem. Alex. says, the Tetragrammaton, the mystic Name, is pronounced IAOT, meaning, "He that is and shall be." Theodoret states that the four letters of the Holy Name were pronounced by the Samaritans IABE (*Javé*); by the Jews, IAΩ. Jerome (Psalm viii.), "The Name of the Lord amongst the Hebrews is of four letters, Jod, He, Vau, He; which is properly the name of God, and may be read as IAHO (*Jaho*), and is held by the Jews for ineffable." The author of the treatise 'On Interpretation' says, "the Egyptians express the name of the Supreme Being by the seven Greek vowels, IEHΩOYA;" which last sufficiently explains their so frequent occurrence upon the talismans under consideration. The entire idea of the Ineffable Name was evidently derived by the Egyptians (from whom the Jews borrowed it) from the Hindoo doctrine concerning the title O'M, or AUM, itself, like IAW, triliteral. It is certain, however difficult to explain, that the names of the chief Egyptian deities are Sanscrit; as Isis, *Mistress*; Serapis, *Sri-pa*; Nilus, *Blue-water*, &c.

[2] "Quia sacerdotes eorum tibia tympanisque concinebant, hedera vinciebantur, vitisque aurea templo reperta."

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its relationship with the rites of the merry god of wine; the only character in which the *Romans* popularly recognised Bacchus. But the ancient theory has found supporters in modern times; notably in the learned Dr. Stukeley, the rector of St. George the Martyr: he having, without any scandal to his own by no means strait-laced generation, advanced in an elaborate treatise such a theory; which puts to shame the boldest flights of the 'Essayists and Reviewers,' or even the interpretations of the indiscreet Apostle to the Zooloos. Ludicrously enough—as if to support the Roman scandal, the German Jews celebrate still the Feast of Purim and the fall of Haman by getting as royally drunk as their means afford.[1] Whether the result of such a connexion or not, the practices of some amongst the later Gnostics appear derived from the Bacchic mysteries, curiously modified by Christian doctrine. Thus, "they kept a tame serpent in a *cista*, or sacred ark, and when celebrating their mysteries piled loaves on a table before it, and then invoked the serpent to come forth. Whereupon, opening of himself the ark, he would come forth, mount upon the table, and twine around the loaves, which they then broke in pieces and distributed amongst the worshippers, calling this the 'Perfect Sacrifice,' and their 'Eucharist'" (Epiphan. Hæres. xxxvii.).

The titles of Iao often occur, cut by a later hand, on gems of a much better date, but whose subjects are analogous to the ideas embodied in this deity, such as the Sphinx, the Lion, the Gorgon's head, and Sol in his car. But the most interesting type that has come under my notice, as unmistakeably pointing out

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[1] The Moon to the Egyptians, as to the present Orientals, was of the masculine gender, and designated by the phonetic name *Aah* or *Ioh*. Thoth was sometimes identified with it; hence his emblem the Ibis, accompanied with the Crescent, have the legend *Ioh*; "because," says Plutarch, "Mercury accompanies the Moon around the Earth, as Hercules does the Sun." When Thoth (Tat) appears as Mercury, he has the head of an ibis and holds the tablet; but in his character of the Moon-god, or *Deus Lunus*, he has the face of a man crowned by the crescent which supports the solar disk, sometimes topped by a double plume.

Hence came the Greek notion mentioned by Plutarch: "the Egyptians call the Moon the Mother of the World, and say it is of both sexes;" and similarly Spartian, in his Life of Caracalla, "the Moon, in a mystic sense called by the Egyptians male and female."

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the true deity understood by the name Abraxas, is a gem in the Bosanquet Collection, lately communicated to me by the kindness of the owner. On this we behold the god Abraxas, with head of cock, cuirassed body, and serpent legs, brandishing his whip, and mounted in the four-horse car of Sol, in the exact attitude of its usual occupant, Phœbus. In the exergue the address **CABAΩ**, "Glory unto thee:" on the reverse, in a cartouche formed by a coiled asp—precisely as the Hindoos write the ineffable name Aum—the titles **IAΩ ABPACAΞ**.

Here, however, before dismissing the subject, it is necessary to notice the strange theory of Matter laid down in his 'Histoire Critique du Gnosticisme,' based upon a statement of Origen (to be hereafter considered), that Iao, Adonai, Sabaoth, were names of the genii of the moon, sun, and planets; beings far inferior in rank, and even antagonistic, to Abraxas, the representative of the Supreme Creator himself. Hence Matter explains the warlike attitude of the god as expressing his office of scaring away the *demon* Iao, who is expressed by his name merely placed in a part of the picture that denotes his inferiority. But, resting on the authority of the monuments themselves, I have no hesitation whatever, as far as they are concerned, in altogether rejecting such an exposition of their meaning. The doctrine, if ever held, must have been the figment of some recent sect, setting itself above all Jewish or Magian traditions,[1] and certainly never that professed by the numerous body who engraved and wore the talismans that have come down to us in such abundance. The inscriptions upon these place it out of doubt that Abraxas, Adonai, Sabao, are but synonyms or titles of Iao, the deity actually represented by the figure itself. Thus, we find the prayer on an amulet, "Iao, Abraxas, Adonai, Holy Name, Holy Powers, defend Vibia Paulina from every evil spirit;" and these same names perpetually recur united together, and followed by the epithets **ABΛANAΘABΛA**, "Thou art the Father;" **CEMEC EIΛAM**, "Eternal Sun;" a mode of invocation

[1] The object indeed of the Valentinians is obvious: they exalted their own new-imported Tetrad by placing so immeasurably below it the most holy names of the old religions.

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which would certainly have never been addressed to beings of a discordant, much less of an antagonistic, nature to each other. Besides, if Abraxas were the opponent and future destroyer of Iao, it were absurd to place their names together—that of Iao taking precedence—each being equally invoked in the accompanying prayer, and honoured by the same titles of adoration. Moreover the composite figure, or Pantheus, which represents, as all writers agree, the god Abraxas himself, is much more frequently accompanied by the inscription Iao than by the epithet Abraxas; and, nevertheless, though only the first name appears, it is followed by the same address—"Thou art our Father," &c.—as when both names are engraved in union. It is, besides, altogether contrary to the rules of symbolism to represent the one personage in a scene by a figure or emblem, the other by the characters of his name alone; and as repugnant to reason to engrave the figure of the god with the name of his adversary placed in a most conspicuous position, as in mediæval art to have painted a crucifix with Satan's name replacing the holy I.N.R.I. In addition to this it has already been demonstrated that the numerical, or kabalistic, value of the name Abraxas bears a distinct reference to the nature of the god, the ruler of the year, worshipped from the earliest times under the title of Iao.

THE SCHEMA OF THE OPHITES.

This is the fitting place to introduce the account of the soul's upward passage after death, preserved by Origen (In Celsum, vi. 24) and adopted by Matter. Origen had procured by some means or other a parchment containing the successive stages of the soul's heavenward journey, the different powers it should encounter in its flight, and the proper invocations by which their permission to cross their domains should be obtained. This was called the Schema or Diagramma of the Ophites. Much of it is evidently drawn from the same source as the Neo-Platonic doctrine touching the planetary origin of the soul's faculties, which has been already examined by us. It was the grand article of the Gnostic belief that the soul, when released from the body, and on its way to be absorbed into the Infinite of the Godhead, the utmost aspiration

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of all Oriental religions (the Buddhist Nirwana, "Perfect Repose," or Indolentia of the Epicureans), was obliged to pass through the regions of the planets, each ruled by its own presiding genius, beings of a somewhat *material* and therefore malignant character, just as in the Zoroastrian doctrine the Seven Devs, archministers of Ahriman, are chained each to a separate planet. To obtain permission to traverse their domains a form of prayer was prescribed in each case, and these are also given by Origen. These genii were, Adonai, of the Sun; Iao, of the Moon; Eloi, of Jupiter; Sabao, of Mars; Orai, of Venus; Astaphai, of Mercury; and Ildabaoth, of Saturn. All these names are to be read more or less frequently upon our talismans, though probably in a different sense from that taken by the author of the Schema.[1] The names of the Jewish angels, Michael, Gabriel, Suriel, Raphael, Thautabaoth, and Erataoth, also occur as names of the genii presiding over the Fixed Stars, the Bear, Serpent, Eagle, Lion, Dog, and Bull. These notions are manifestly of Magian origin, and acquired by the Jews during the long period their country formed a province of the Persian empire. In the ancient creed they were all either titles and attributes, or else the chiefest angels and ministering spirits of the Most High; but in the Gnostic mythology they had been degraded from their high estate, and reduced to the rank of secondary genii of a mixed nature, made up of good and evil, but all equally anxious to win souls from the empire of Abraxas, the proper lord and creator of the Whole.[2] The only satisfactory explanation of such an appro-

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[1] St. Paul warns his flock against being seduced into "a worshipping of angels;" nevertheless, this adoration and the multiplication of their names went on augmenting to that pitch, that a Council held under Pope Zacharias reduced them, as objects of worship, to three alone; viz., Michael, Gabriel, Raphael. This retrenchment was enforced by Charlemagne in a capitulary issued at Aix-la-Chapelle.

In the Diagram of the Ophites Origen tells us Michael was represented by a lion, Suriel by an ox, Raphael by a serpent, Gabriel by an eagle, Thautabaoth by a bear, Erataoth by a dog, Onioth or Zartaroth by an ass.

[2] The reward promised to the Angel of the Church at Thyatira (Ap. ii. 28), "And I will give him the Morning Star," evidently bears reference to this doctrine concerning the Angels of the planets. Dante, in his Paradiso, no doubt on the authority of ancient tradition, makes Mercury the abode of those spirits moved in life to glorious deeds by the love of fame;

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priation of the titles is a very brief one, that the later semi-Christian semi-Buddhistic philosophers, who found the source of all evil in matter, and therefore in the material creation, applied these ancient names, hallowed in their Egyptian usage, to denote the various agents of the Creator, esteemed, from their office, as mere demons; exactly as they by a similar process transformed the sacred names of the Jewish, and yet more blasphemously those of the Christian creed. But the talisman-makers belonging to the old and revived set of ideas continued to employ the same invocations in their original and time-honoured sense.

The adjurations to the planetary genii, and the mode of addressing them, will be considered in the section treating of the deposit of talismans in tombs.

ABRAXASTER, OR LATER ADAPTED EGYPTIAN.

Besides the genuine Abraxas gems, there exists a vastly more numerous family popularly passing under that name, but which Bellermann aptly designates as Abraxasters,[1] on account of their affinity. These are the gods of the primitive Egyptian mythology, but adopted in the syncretistic religions of the age as the types of new ideas, and to a considerable extent by sects holding the doctrines of Christianity in combination with the old. The Agathodæmon, Chnuphis, has already been discussed at length: it only remains to add that its Coptic origin, *Chnepth*, is given by some as the root of the Greek name *Canopus*, the god whose symbol was the vase covered by a human head, used for purifying the sacred Nile water. Hence this vase is often engraved between two erect asps, like heraldic supporters.[2]

Amongst these the most frequent and most important type of all is the jackal-headed god Anubis, usually represented in his

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Venus of true lovers; Luna of theologians; Mars of martyrs for the faith; Jupiter of good princes; Saturn of such as have led a contemplative and recluse life.

[1] His third class, the Abraxoid, comprise all those, and their number is infinite, which are purely astrological, viz., the Decani, the Signs, the Planets, &c.

[2] Perhaps the original of the spherical vase, Nile-pitcher, Vase of Sins; so variously interpreted in these relics, as will be pointed out hereafter.

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ancient form, but occasionally with both a human and a jackal's head, often bearing the caduceus of Hermes to denote his office of conducting departed souls through the planets (not as of yore, through the shades) to their final rest in the Pleroma; sometimes displaying a palm announcing the victory of the faithful, sometimes presiding over the Psychostasia or Weighing of the soul, and thus passing for the type of Christ, the judge of the quick and dead.[1] In old Greek gems Hermes often appears with his caduceus, bending over and assisting the soul to emerge from the earth, or Hades; a group presenting a strange coincidence, in form at least (perhaps in origin), with the mediæval representation of the Saviour raising souls out of Purgatory. The Zoroastrian hell, or burning lake of molten metal, into which at the judgment-day Ahriman and his followers were to be cast, had for its object the ultimate purification of the condemned—a merciful doctrine held by Origen, and partly allowed by Jerome.

Such an acceptation of Anubis is strangely adopted in a sard of my own, which offers to the first view that most orthodox and primitive Christian figure the Good Shepherd, bearing a lamb upon his shoulders, a crook in his hand, the loins girt with a belt having long and flowing ends; but on closer examination the figure resolves itself into the double-headed Anubis, the head of the lamb doing duty for that of the jackal springing from the same shoulders as the man's, whilst the curved end of the girdle becomes the long and curly tail of the beast. By this, too, we are enabled rightly to understand a rude drawing lately discovered on the wall of a vault[2] on the Palatine, which represents this jackal-headed figure nailed to the cross with the inscription ΑΛΕΞΑΜΕΝΟC CΕΒΕΤΕ ΤΟΝ ΘΕΟΝ; in reality the work of some pious Gnostic, but which is usually looked upon as a heathen blasphemy, because the jackal's head is taken for that of an ass. Here, too, we find an illustration of Tertullian's meaning when he says (Apol. xvi.) to his opponent, "Like many others you have dreamed that an *ass's head* is our god. But a new version of our god has lately been made public in Rome ever since the time that

[1] In Catholic art, Michael holds the scales.

[2] The cell of a slave, one "of Cæsar's household."

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ANUBIS-CHRISTOS.

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a certain hireling convict of a bull-fighter put forth a picture with some such inscription as this, 'The God of the Christians, ΟΝΟΚΟΙΗΤΗΣ.' He was there depicted with the ears of an ass, with one of his feet hoofed,[1] holding in his hand a book, and clad in the toga." An almost exact description this of the Anubis figure given by Matter, Pl. II. C. No. 1, save that instead of the book he holds a palm branch and caduceus. The same calumny was transferred somewhat later by the Christians themselves to the account of the Gnostics. Not being acquainted with the Egyptian animal, they mistook (perhaps intentionally) the jackal's head for that of an ass, which, to say the truth, it greatly resembles in the rude drawing of our gems. Thus we find Epiphanius at the end of the fourth century asserting (Hæres. xxvi.) that "the Gnostic Sabaoth has, according to some, the *face* of an *ass*, according to others, that of a *hog*; on which last account he hath forbidden the Jews to eat swine's flesh." This last notion Petronius alludes to in his

"Judæus licet et *porcinum numen* adoret."

Now *Sabaoth* being held by all these sectaries as the national god of the Jews, it is very probable that in the same confusion of two beasts originated that belief so prevalent amongst the ancients, and quoted by Tacitus (Hist. v. 4), that the secret object of worship so jealously guarded within the Sanctuary[2] at Jerusalem was the image of this animal (the wild ass), "by the guidance of which they had relieved their thirst and their distress;" Moses having, by the observation of the movements of a troop of them, found out the spring that saved the Congregation from perishing in the Wilderness. Again, in the spurious gospel, The Genealogy of Mary,[3] "the cause assigned for the death of

[1] The Anubis in Plate I. 3, shows most conspicuously one of his feet hoofed.

[2] This story is connected with the belief that Bacchus was the real god of the Jews, for the Ass was sacred to Bacchus. For this attribution Pliny (xxxv. 1) assigns a curious reason, that the ass was fond of fennel, a poison to all other beasts, but a plant sacred to the god of wine.

[3] This quotation is preserved by Epiphanius, for the work itself is entirely lost. It was ascribed to Matthew, and was taken for their special authority by the Collyridians, so called from their *sacrificing cakes* to the Virgin Mary, whom they pre-

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Zacharias, the son of Barachias, is, that going into the Temple, he beheld standing within the Sanctuary a man with the face of an ass; and when he was rushing out to cry unto the people, Woe unto you! whom do ye worship? he was struck with dumbness by the apparition. But afterwards, when he had recovered his speech, and revealed the vision to the Jews, they slew him as a blasphemer. And this they assign as the reason why the high-priest had bells fastened around the hem of his garment, in order that this monstrous deity might, by their tinkling, be warned of his approach, and so have time to conceal himself."

To the same family also belongs the youth Harpocrates, or Horus (the vernal sun), having the emblem of fecundity monstrously exaggerated, and seated upon the lotus flower, often accompanied by Anubis, to express the necessary regeneration of the believer. This spiritual regeneration is sometimes typified in a very singular and literal manner by the group of the Sun-Lion impregnating a female, the usual Eastern personification of the disembodied spirit, who submits to the operation as

"Pectoribus positis sublatis femina lumbis."

Horus often is figured sailing through the heavens in the sacred boat or *Baris*, steered by two hawks, the sun and the moon over his head, and accompanied by the names Iao, Sabao, &c., exactly as Abraxas himself, and that with sufficient reason, on account of the solar nature of both divinities. If Horus be, as Heliodorus tells us, a title of the Nile (Blue-water), this type exhibits another point of analogy to the Hindoo boyish Neruana[1] floating on the face of the waters in his leaf, with all his body painted azure. To complete the resemblance, the vase so commonly seen hanging by a cord from the hand of Anubis is the regular Brahminical *Lotah*, or brass drinking-cup.

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tended was Virgin-born. Faustus, Bishop of Riez, also cites it concerning the parentage of the B. V. M. The "Birth of Mary" still extant is of a totally different character, a mere orthodox monkish legend; the authority with the "Protevangelion" for all the mediæval pictures and sculptures setting forth the events in her life.

[1] Hence the Grecian Nereus.

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THE SEVEN VOWELS.

The backs of such amulets are often filled up with the seven vowels of the Greek alphabet arranged in as many lines, the vowels distributed in all the permutations possible, subject to the rule that each line must contain no more than the mystic number, Seven. This grouping illustrates the curious tenet that each vowel represents the sound uttered in its revolution by one particular planet, which, all combined, form one eternal hymn to the glory of the great Creator of the Universe. This is the "Music of the Spheres," a term so often used without the slightest notion of its true meaning; and this Indian fiction was already known to Plato, who beautifully employs it in his vision of Er, though he makes each of the seven notes to proceed from a syren seated upon the several spheres, set in motion by the Fates.

Or, if we choose to accept the authority of the treatise 'On Interpretation,' the Seven Vowels represent the ineffable name of the Creator, an explanation supported by the fact that these combinations of the vowels often appear purposely to include and veil from the profane sense the sacred triliteral ΙΑΩ.

Montfaucon, Pl. 169, gives a set of inscriptions found at Miletus in which these vowels, variously combined, form the name of the god who is thus besought to protect that city and all its inhabitants. In the first the name Jehovah is evidently expressed.

ΙΕΟΥΑΗΩ ΑΕΗΙ ΟΥΩ ΑΓΙΕ ΦΥΛΑCΟΝ ΤΗΝ ΠΟΛΙΝ ΜΙΛΗCΙΩΝ ΚΑΙ ΠΑΝΤΑC ΤΟΥC ΚΑΤΟΙΚΟΥΝΤΑC.

The outline of a human figure[1] holding by its neck the erect serpent, and entirely filled up with such vowels, has been explained as the type of the spiritual man, regenerated, and entirely freed from earthly taint, or admitted amongst the Consolati, in the phrase of the mediæval Manicheans. Scaliger, however, as quoted by Salmasius, on this point (De An. Climact.[2]), takes him to be the representative of the 365 æons,

[1] The Kabbalists' Adam-Kadmon, the type according to which the earthly Adam was created.

[2] This treatise, apparently composed by Salmasius for the purpose of displaying his multifarious learning on all possible subjects, contains an excellent dissertation upon astrological talismans.

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all whose names are *supposed* to be compressed within the outline —in short, the emblem of the Pleroma.

LEGENDS AND FORMULÆ.

Besides the talismans merely engraved with the Seven Vowels, many have the reverse covered with long inscriptions, whilst some present nothing but long strings of letters on both obverse and reverse.[1] The Orientalist, desirous of exercising his ingenuity in the decyphering of these, for the most part, unexplained monuments, will find a vast collection of such in Raspe's Catalogue of Tassie's Pastes, from No. 433 to 633, copied and reproduced with scrupulous accuracy. The reason he there gives for the attention he has paid to a class previously so neglected is a very sound one. "All these sects have evidently borrowed their symbols, and probably also their respective explanations, from the iconology and mysteries of the Egyptians and other nations of the East.[2] If, as regards the meaning of hieroglyphics and symbols, they had no better information, the Gnostics of Egypt and Syria had at least national traditions to depend upon: a point assuredly of some weight. If, therefore, the more recent sects of Gnostics with this their symbolical learning have established new opinions and fresh modifications of superstition upon the basis of the old, we are not therefore to conclude that they knew nothing about, and wantonly gave a new meaning to,

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[1] Clem. Alex. (Strom. i.) calls these Basilidan Inscriptions and Names, *Ephesian Letters*, meaning thereby legends in an unknown tongue, like the words graven upon the zone and the feet of the Ephesian Diana, which Hesychius has preserved: viz., "Aski, Kataski, Haix, Tetrax, Damnameneus, Aision" — interpreted as, Darkness, Light, Himself, the Sun, Truth. These Ephesian words, says Plutarch (Sympos.), the Magi used to recite over those *possessed by devils*. *Damnameneus* is seen on a Gnostic amulet, a mummy enfolded by a serpent, in the De la Turbie Collection. Its meaning, "the Sun," is appropriate enough to a Mithraic stone.

[2] The earliest example of these mystic formulæ is that of the diviner Brandios, sung by the Milesians to drive away a pestilence, and preserved in Clem. Alex.—

βεδυ, ξαμψ, χθω, πληκτρον, σφιγξ,
κναξβι, χθυπτης, φλεγμω, δροψ.

where he explains βεδυ as signifying the Air, ξαμψ the Sea, and πληκτρον the Sun.

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the symbols which they thus misapplied. This is the only rational point of view in which these amulets and engravings ought to be studied." These formulæ are invariably written in the Greek character, intermixed with strange symbols, analogous to, and evidently derived from, the Hindoo Caste-Marks, and which in their turn became the source of those subsequently adopted by the alchemists and Rosicrucians. The consideration of these, of which I have collected numerous examples from all dates and countries, will be the subject of a separate chapter.

A circumstance connected with these legends the most unaccountable is, wherefore the Pehlevi character, the national one of the Magi of those times, should not have been used for inscriptions so often couched in their language; the sole instance of a talisman in Pehlevi writing that has come to light being a small scroll of silver leaf, folded up within a gold heart, now in the Musée Napoléon III., No. 254. Neither are any to be seen in the Punic, though that character with the Pehlevi was yet the current mode of writing throughout Asia. As for the present square Hebrew lettering, all stones on which such occurs are mere cabalistic or Rosicrucian talismans of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Of hieroglyphic writing no trace appears: even the Demotic modification of it had long before been superseded at Alexandria by the Greek characters.[1]

The language of these formulæ is rarely Greek, never Latin; for the most part Coptic or Syriac.[2] Jamblichus in his letter to Porphyry supplies the reason, expressly stating that "the gods are well pleased with invocations addressed unto them in the Egyptian and Assyrian tongues, as being ancient and cognate languages to *their own*, and those in which prayer was first made unto them; and they have therefore stamped as sacred the entire language of those holy nations."[3] It is a singular coin-

[1] I have met with no exception to this rule in my own experience; but Caylus gives (vii. pl. 8) an oval agate, green barred with white, engraved in a better style than usual, with the frequent four-winged Priapean genius in the sacred boat; and on the reverse a vertical line of neatly-cut genuine hieroglyphics.

[2] Rather Syro-Chaldee.

[3] The word KAMAP or KPAMMA (*Moon*, Arab.), often seen in these legends, throws a light upon Pliny's remark, that the Magi recommended

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cidence that Justinus Kerner, in his extraordinary book 'Die Scherin von Prevorst,' in reading which one continually fluctuates between the two ideas of its being either a ridiculous fiction, or a revelation of the profoundest truth, assigns a similar reason why the writing used by the visitants from the other world should so much resemble Arabic: inasmuch as that had the best claim to be considered the primitive language of mankind. But "omne ignotum pro magnifico" has ever been the maxim of priestcraft; and experience has demonstrated its truth. More particularly does the rule apply to the objects of adoration: thus Orpheus hath—

> "Then whilst the caldron bubbles o'er the flame,
> Address each godhead by his mystic name;
> Full well the Immortals all are pleased to hear
> Their secret names rise in the muttered prayer."

Thus Irenæus gives a formula, "couched in Hebrew words in order to inspire greater awe into the Gallic neophyte" [at Lugdunum], used by certain Gnostics in administering Baptism. Βασσεμα χαμοσσε βα αιανορα μισταδια ρονασα κουστα Βαβαφορ καλαχθαι: "I invoke Thee, supreme over every Virtue, the Light of the Father by name, the good Spirit, and the Life, because thou hast reigned in the body." Another form was, Μεσσια ου φαρεγ ναμεμψαιμαν χαλδαιαν μοσομηδαεα ακφραναι ψαονα Ιησου Ναζαρια: "I do not separate the Spirit, the Head and the supercelestial Virtue, the merciful One. May I prosper in thy name, O Saviour of Truth!" The most important of such formulæ, to judge from its frequent repetition and the care bestowed upon its engraving, is the one here transcribed. My copy is taken from the famous Herz garnet, perhaps the finest talisman known.

"Lunae nomen ac Solis" to be cut on amethysts or emeralds to render them amulets against witchcraft, and to give success at court. In the Praun Collection was an oval emerald (of very bad quality, however) which I take for one of these very amulets, being engraved with the names IAW. CABAWΘ. ABPACAC. A convincing proof to the mineralogist that Alexandria was the chief seat of the manufacture of these talismans, is the *material*, besides the alphabet almost invariably employed. It is indeed unaccountable why we never find on them the proper character of the Magi, the Pehlevi; in which all the legends upon works executed in the Persian Empire, at that time, were written.

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It is a thick heart-shaped slab, 2¾ in. high by 1½ in. wide, having on one side 14, on the other 11 lines neatly engraved in the Greek character used in the second century. It evidently contains Zend and Chaldee words, intermixed with the names of angels, and the usual titles of Abraxas:

Obverse.	*Reverse.*
ΑΤΩCΑCΑΩΑΑΩΝЄ	ΟΙΓΙCCΩΡΟΥΑΡ
CЄΜЄCЄΙΑΑΜΑΒΡΑCΑC	ΙΑΩΡЄΩΗΑΦΟΝ
C3ΖΥΡΡΑΤΗΑΚΡΑΜΜΑ	ΑΙΩ ΑΙΗ ΤΟC
ΚΡΑΜΜΑΚΑΝΑΡΙCCCЄ	ΩΑΙΗ ΜΑΩ ΗΑΟ
ΓΓЄΝΒΑΛΦΑΡΑΝΓΗC	ЄΩΑ ΟΥΩ ЄΥΗ
ЄΜЄCЄΙΑΑΜΩΒΑΗΜ	ΩΑΙΥЄΙΗΙЄ
ΑCΝΙΑΜΒΩΝΑΡΟΥ	ΑΗЄЄЄΥΩ
ΑΝΤΑΜΙΥΠΗΑΝ	ΗΑΩΑЄΥЄΩЄ
ΜΟΡΑΡΑΧCΙΔ	ΓΗЄЄΩΑЄЄ
ΑΛ3ЄΤЄΜΑΙ	ΩΗΑΩΗΝΗΦΙ
	ΗΑΩΥΗΜЄΨ
	ЄΜΗΑΙΑΟΑ
	ΑΙΗΗΩΩΩ
	ЄΩΩ

(There is no distinction between A and Λ throughout.)

These two inscriptions exactly agree with the obverse and reverse of the oval calcedony given by Chiflet (Fig. 69), excepting that the latter has in addition a few words enclosed within a coiled serpent at the top. Of this his friend Wendelin, reading the language as good Greek, had made out a most orthodox version, containing an invocation to the Trinity, &c., which, however, did not by any means satisfy the learned and sagacious Canon. The opening evidently is, "Blessed be the King of Kings, the Lord, the Eternal Sun, Abraxas, and Zuratel, the Moon. . . ."[1]

Amongst the Townley Gems (British Museum) is a large oval sard, agreeing in all but a few letters with Chiflet's example.

[1] I take the first words for the Pehlevi Ato Sha Shaan; the legends on the Sassanian gems often begin with Ato-Ri, Bless the king.

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Doubtless such large and loaded stones served for pocket prayer-books, and the invocations upon them were recited at the sacred rites by the possessor. To some such *manual* of devotion Orpheus may allude when he says—

> "Pray, with the flowered *Petraces* in thine hand,
> When hecatombs before the altar stand."

There is a peculiarity in the shape of the letters in nearly all these inscriptions, which of itself serves to identify any stone belonging to the class. They are all formed by straight lines, the Θ, O, and C made as squares, either in consequence of the rudeness of the instrument employed, or the want of skill in the engraver having prevented his forming circular characters, to do which neatly requires the utmost dexterity and practice, and is the most difficult task that can be demanded from the *wheel*, for it was with this new invention,[1] as the equality of the lines demonstrates, that these rude, misshapen letters were faintly sketched upon the stone.

These invocations are sometimes found superadded on the backs of gems of a much earlier date, apparently for the sake of converting them into amulets. Of such a conversion the most singular example known to me is a fine cameo,[2] the bust of Commodus: on the back of the stone, in the black ground of the sardonyx, is engraved the god Abraxas, in his usual shape, surrounded by the unique legend—

ΑΡΔΟΥ ΓΕΝΝΑΙ ΟΔΕΜΕΝΑΙ ΒΑCΙΛΙCΚΩC.

Another in Her Majesty's collection, a cameo, with the helmeted heads *regardant* of the two elder sons of Constantine, has on the back Anubis, with a legend in large rude lettering which defies even transcription. The extremely barbarous style of these additions obliges us to refer them to a much later period than that of the camei themselves; and the position they occupy

[1] In all likelihood due to the Alexandrian glass-workers, famed for their engraved vases; alluded to by Pliny in the words, "vitrum aliud argenti modo cælatur;" and called by Martial "tepidi toreumata Nili."

[2] In the Marlborough Cabinet.

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being necessarily concealed, they could only have been designed for talismans to protect the wearer.

As far as the history of the Glyptic art is concerned, these inscribed gems have a value by furnishing the date when the wheel came into use in the lapidary's atelier; for the minute and elegant lettering of earlier work will be found, if examined by the microscope, to have been cut into the gem with the diamond point alone, and hence its perfect regularity and neatness. Raspe (Cat. p. 38) has given accurate transcripts of a large number of these inscriptions belonging to every form of Gnosticism. Chabouillet has lately done the same for those (very numerous) in the French Cabinet, in his Cat. des Camées et P. G. de la Bib. Imp., p. 282.

In Gorlaei Dactyliotheca (ed. 1695), Nos. 326 to 476 are entirely Gnostic or astrological designs, and include the larger part of those published by Chiflet in Macarii Apistopistus (1610), whose plates have been re-engraved for the work on a reduced scale, but with many additions from impressions collected by Gronovius himself, as it would seem.

As examples of the class may be cited, Anubis, double headed, holding, with four hands, torches and daggers. On the reverse— ΠΕΡΑ - AMBO[1] - VBAKA - ΚΞΙΚ - ΥΚ (Pl. i. 3) — Lion-headed goddess, *Taf-Neith*, standing, lotus-crowned. Reverse, apparently Syriac, XVXBA - XVXBA - KAXVA - BAZA - KAX - KX.

Legend cut in elegant characters upon a large Topaz en cabochon: on the reverse is an oval, enclosing Η Ι, an eye, a crossed square, and a Δ.

ΑΜΑΡΥCΜΗΡΙΑΕΜΙΟΥω
ΡΟΔCΝΑΒΑΡΕΕΗΙΟΥω
ΝΑΒΑΡΝΕΗΙΟΥω
ΕΡΑΘΡΑΥΜΟΥω
ΖΑΓΕCΟΨΙΟΥω
ΟΡΘΡΟΧΟΡCΕΥω
ΑΧΑΗΜΑΡΕω

Legend cut in larger and ruder letters on a convex calcedony.

[1] Ambo, the Coptic for Anubis.

ASHMOLEAN OXFORD MUSEUM

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Reverse, the usual three ΖΖΖ traversed by a bar. This legend, slightly varied, occurs in yet ruder lettering on the reverse of an intaglio, a female portrait, in Caylus, VI., Pl. xl., 4 and 5.

ΣΤΟΧΒΑΘΑ
ΗΜΑΛΑΚΙΣΘΟΜ
ΜΑΚΟΧΨΟΧ
ΑΒΡΑΜΜΑΩΘΗ[1]
ΑΒΡΑΜΜΗΑ

A very minute figure of Abraxas, on Green Jasper, has the uncommon invocation to him by the title of *Abrachar*—

ΑΒΡΑΧΑΡΣ—ΑΓΡΑΩΑ ΑΩΑΡΙΩΝΙ·Ε

A Green Jasper (Praun) is covered with a neatly cut inscription in several lines, surrounding one enclosed in a circle formed of two lines, upon which are cut marks resembling in arrangement the Irish Oghams.[2] This stone is much chipped, and many initial letters thus lost.

ΠΥΡΟΣΟΧ
ΚΡΗΦΟ
ΥΜΑΡΤΑ
ΑΡΦΟΥ
ΟΥΘΕΡ
ΦΟΥΘΑΙ

ΧΟΥΒΥ . . .
ΛΑΙΛΑΜ
ΘΑΛΘΑΛ
ΨΥΘΑΘΟ
ΡΟΣΙΩ
ΙΩ

ΑΝΟΧ
ΜΟΥΙ
ΩΡΩ
ΥΑΛΑΛ

ΛΥΣΠΙΘΙΛΑΚΥΘΩ
ΣΥΠΙΝΕΙΨΙΑ

A brown calcedony neatly engraved with a caduceus within a wreath, doubtless secured the benign influence of Thoth or Hermes, by the ΑΚΡΙΩΦΙ on its reverse. Most singular is a

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[1] Abram here means the Seir-Ampin, Primitive Man of the Kabbalists, made up of 243 members, the numerical value of the Hebrew letters in the name.

[2] They exactly correspond with the Celtic Ogham, in which all the letters of the alphabet are represented by a similar disposition of short strokes, in different relations to one continuous line.

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yellow jasper, which displays a pierced *quatrefoil* (that mediæval emblem of an angel) above the name ΙΑΩ, followed by the mystic vowels ΑΕΙΗΟΥΩΑΙ: then ΓΑΒΑΩΘ (*sic*), and for reverse ✱ΜΙΧΑΗΛ✱.

Creuzer (Archæol. III., last plate) figures a large oval plasma, engraved with this formula enclosed within a coiled-up serpent biting its tail. Several of the letters are run together by *nexus* of unusual forms, thus read by him:—οιοδηονανηοδαη'ξιχυχυκ εραταγρις-ουτος εστιν ο πρωτοπατωρ ο περι σωματος μονος ων δια παντων τορευομενος Cολομωντος σφραγις Fυξξζζοδυα

κωNFCτω-λεοντοκεφαλη

The vowels in the first lines conceal the "Ineffable Name," Iao, with the singular title of Eratagris, and the ο περισωματος seems a Coptic barbarism for ασωματος,[2] "Incorporeal." But the chief interest of the legend is the profession that the unknown letters following are the *Signet of Solomon*, showing at what an early date that famous seal had attained celebrity as the greatest of talismans. The "lion-headed" in the last word may apply to the Pater Bromius.[3]

The "Pater Bromius" of the Mithraic Cave may also lay claim to the title of Sabao, so often coupled with *Adonai*, for Bacchus rejoices in the epithet Sabazius, derived from the shout of *Sabaoi* raised during the orgies by his votaries—a word identical with the Hebrew *Sabi*, "glory." Certain sectaries of our day who bellow out the same word at their "Revivals" are little aware what an ancient and congenial authority they have for their vociferations. *Adonai*, "our Lord," is converted by the Greeks into *Adoneus*, a synonym of Pluto; and I have already adduced the line of Orpheus proclaiming the identity of Pluto, Bacchus, and Sol—a statement recalling the ancient explanation that the Syrian rite, the mourning for Adonis ("the women

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[1] Intended apparently for the Living Name, consisting of thirty letters revealed to Marcus by the Supreme Tetrad.

[2] In fact περι, in composition, has properly this force; e.g. περιαιρεθεις, "divested of," which may have misled the illiterate Coptic magician.

[3] The whole may be rendered, "He is the Primal Father (Bythos) incorporeal, sole-existing, pervading all things . . . the lion-headed."

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weeping for Thammuz"), was no more than expressive of the Sun's loss of power in the winter quarter.

LEGENDS INTERPRETED.

Bellermann has explained, from the Coptic, and in a satisfactory manner, several of these "tormenta verborum," as Jerome aptly calls them. The following are amongst the most frequent. **BAINXωωω**, from **BAI**, a prize; **NXOΠ**, secret; **Oωω**, honour. Denoting, perhaps, a symbol given to the neophyte upon his admission into the fraternity. The figures so frequently occurring formed out of lines set at various angles to each other, and intermingled with dots, he plausibly enough takes for the Sacred Lots. These were little sticks and balls taken up at random by the handful out of an urn, and then suffered to fall on the ground: the diviner interpreted the forms they thus assumed according to certain rules, and so expounded the future.[1] The arrangement of the strokes on these talismans represents certain configurations determined as propitious. This explanation is supported by the Geomancy of the modern Arabs,[2] in which lines drawn at random on the sand with a stick are interpreted by persons whose business is that mode of divination. Our fortune-telling by means of tea-grounds is regulated by the similar accidental juxtaposition of particles, forming to the experienced eye defined figures and letters of the alphabet. But it is my own opinion that although Bellermann's theory may apply to some cases, yet many of these symbols are actual arrow-headed characters belonging to the ancient Assyrian alphabet; their forms somewhat corrupted by Greek wizards who employed them, ignorant of their proper sense. What more natural than (the Assyrian language being still considered, as Iamblichus records, peculiarly grateful to the heavenly powers) that some of these invocations should continue to be couched in their antique

[1] Such were the famed "Sortes Antiates" held in Fortuna's hands.

[2] Herodotus (iii. 8) mentions that the only gods worshipped by the Arabians were Dionysos and Venus Urania; called by them Ουροταλ and Αλιλατ; names resembling some occurring in these legends.

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cyphers? Be it remembered this arrow-headed character was the national one of the Persian empire down to its conquest by Alexander, and naturally was preserved in religious usages by the Magi for centuries later. They, at least, were a very unlikely class to trouble themselves with the Greek alphabet or Greek literature, professing, like the Talmudists, a holy horror for both.

MEC·XANAΛΩ. The Messias be propitious unto him (the wearer of the talisman)!

MAPΩHNI. Enlighten mine eyes!

ANOX·XOΛ·XNOVBIC. I am all the Good Spirit! or the Universal Genius of Good.

KAVΛAKAV, according to Theodoret, the Basilidan name for the Saviour, is spelt by Epiphanius **KAVΛAKAVX**, and he ridicules it as an expression taken from Isaiah (xxviii. 10) without any regard to its real meaning in that passage. But it may be derived with better reason from the Arabic, as signifying "Strength upon Strength;" that is, the All-Powerful: or, with Bellermann, from the Coptic **KAB**, a lamp: a title therefore equivalent to "the Burning and the Shining Light."

AMAPΓIΛ seems the Chaldee *Amerchel*, or President.

The Priest figured on these stones wears upon his head the *Kalantica*, a square piece of purple cloth, whence spring two flamingo feathers. Hence πτεροφορος, or plume-wearer, was synonymous with priest in Egypt. The staff in his hand, emblem of his office, "sceptrum sacerdotale," has the serpent entwined *five* times about it, which may explain the **SSS** on the Chnuphis stones.

As for the geometrical figures so often introduced, they bore, perhaps, much the same import as in the Rosicrucian philosophy, which obtained these and many other Gnostic symbols by tradition, probably through the Arabs. In their system, the Square stands for the Four Elements; the Triangle, for Body, Spirit, and Life; or for the Sun, Moon, and Mercury. This last Paracelsus explains by Salt, Sulphur, Quicksilver—according to him the three radical forces of Nature. The Rhombus is the Orphic Egg, whence issued all Creation.

Plutarch, in his treatise "De Iside et Osiride," furnishes a clue to the meaning of others. **MOYΘ**, "Mother," is, according

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to him, a title given to Isis. This word, originally the same as our "Mud," contains an evident allusion to the Earth, out of which Man was formed.[1]

NOOT, written with the square **O**, for **NOYT**, God.

Three characters often occur: the **E** set on its back, a vertical line crossed by two horizontal strokes, and a **Z**, which stand for the numerals 5, 3, 7, *i.e.*, the Triad, Pentad, Heptad, lucky and mystic numbers in all Eastern religions. Hence the letters upon these gems are usually disposed in three, five, or seven lines. For the same reason we find the name **IAω** written with its elements repeated thus, **ωAIAω**, for the sake of obtaining the sacred number Five. Again, by introducing the letter **H**, the Holy Name is repeated in five different forms, **HAI, AHI, HIω, AIω, IAω.**

IAΘAI, God's Providence; **MAΘAHЄ**, God's Honour; **PЄOYHΛЄ**, God's Will; **XωMI**, God's Power; **CBω**, Wisdom; thus expressing in Coptic the five Emanations, Phronesis, Logos, Nous, Dynamis, Sophia.

A common formula, **TAΛA . APAIω . ωAPAOPO . NTOKO . NBAI.** "Protector, Creator! rule, speak, O Lord!"

MAI . MYM . VXΛVM . ωI. Being, Source, Salvation, Food, Iao! implying that Iao is the source, life, salvation, food of the soul. **APΛANA . ΘAMAKA . CAΛKANA . XAMKIM** (Syriac). Our Light! Let thy goodness grant unto us a full lap. Hence, apparently, the purpose of this talisman was to procure fecundity. **AΔONAI . ΛANTAΛA.** Lord! thou art the Lamb. The Sphinx, emblem of beauty, force, and lofty flights, bears on the reverse the words, **ANAKΛA . AKΔAAΘ-ωIωI.** Pursue them (*i.e.* my foes) to destruction, O Lord!

ABRACADABRA.

The normal invocation, **ABΛANAΘABΛA**, "Thou art our Father!" addressed to Iao, becomes by a slight corruption, due to the Latin pronunciation, the long-famous charm Abracadabra.

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[1] Martial's "lutum Prometheum."

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This is conclusively proved by the following prescription of Serenus Sammonicus, physician to Gordian III., about the middle of the third century. He orders the word to be written out for an amulet against all diseases, in the form of an inverted cone, exactly as the Hebrew invocation sometimes occurs cut on these green jaspers.

"Thou must on paper write the spell divine,
Abracadabra called, in many a line;
Each under each in even order place,
But the last letter in each line efface:
As by degrees its elements grow few,
Still take away, but fix the residue,
Till at the last one letter stands alone,
And the whole dwindles to a tapering cone.
Tie this about the neck with flaxen string,
Mighty the good 'twill to the patient bring;
Its wondrous potency shall guard his head,
And drive disease and death far from his bed."

OTHER TYPES ADOPTED BY THE GNOSTICS.

The winged goddesses Athor and Sate, representing the Venus and Juno of the Romans, sometimes appear accompanied by such legends as prove that they also have been enlisted into the Gnostic service, probably as the representatives of certain feminine "Virtues."[1] But another shape repeatedly presents himself, whose true character it is impossible to do more than conjecture, he being a genuine creation of this system of commingled ideas. He is a bearded man, Priapean, with four arms grasping as many hooked sceptres, four wings, and a bird's outspread tail, standing sometimes in the sacred boat, sometimes upon the coiled serpent. As he often holds a scorpion or two by the tails, he may be a Decanus of that sign—a potent guardian; for he is addressed, like Abraxas himself, with the apostrophe ΑΒΛΑΝΑΘΑΒΛΑ! I have likewise met with another type equally difficult to identify, a woman enthroned upon a huge serpent, not the common Agathodæmon, for it lacks the lion's head, and more resembles the asp; the goddess she most resembles is the Phœnician Atergatis, or Mother Earth.

[1] The Sate or Truth appears again as one of the Æons.

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Interesting above the rest for the part it subsequently filled in mediæval times, is the figure of Osiris wearing a radiated crown, his body swathed like a mummy, and always erect in full face; the true "Baphomet" of the Templars. Sometimes he stands upon the heads of four angels in postures of adoration, upon whom two streams of water (or perhaps blood and water) flow out of his sides. Such a group indeed has been explained as Ormuzd borne up by the angels of the elements; and the idea is in truth rather of the Persian than the Egyptian cast, for on Assyrian monuments Athor often appears pouring out from her extended arms the waters of life upon the subject figures. The Persian female Ized Arduisher is by her title the "Giver of the Living Water."[1]

Another not uncommon type is an armed man, the *Mithraic Soldier*, either holding a spear terminating in a cock's head, or else grasping two serpents. This may refer to the circumstance that in Egypt a certain sect went by the name Στρατιωτικοι, "Militant" and "Phibionitæ." A most singular design is the three-headed and three-bodied god, who, standing in the attitude of Priapus, grasps in one hand the symbol of fecundity, in the other holding scorpions and serpents. This type, in certain respects, has a great analogy to the ancient Osiris, but the triadism introduced bears the unmistakeable stamp of an Indian origin. At each side rise two obelisks engraved with letters, representing the "Pillars of Hermes," on which that god had engraved the "Omne Scibile," as Tubal did in anticipation of the Deluge, and which yet survive among Masonic emblems, vulgarized into Jachin and Boaz, the Pillars of *Solomon*.

ZODIACAL DECANI, OR ABRAXOIDS.

It is often impossible to decide whether a figure be a type of some Gnostic and religious idea, or merely an astrological genius

[1] Another symbol, the Θ, may be explained by what Eusebius notices of the Egyptian mode of representing the World, by a circle coloured sky-blue and besprinkled with flames, in the centre an extended serpent; so that the whole figure resembled the letter Θ in the Ophite Diagram.

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whose influence was thus engaged for the wearer's protection. And this difficulty arises from the very nature of the subject, seeing how much these creeds were tinctured by Magism, whose gods were no other than the starry powers. Thus as regards the most popular of all, Chnumis himself, the Agathodæmon Serpent, we actually find Hephæstion describing him as one of the Three Decani in Cancer. Salmasius with reason derives the term *Decanus* from the Chaldee *Dekan*, "Inspector," exactly rendered in Greek by Horoscopus, "the star that looks down on the nativity."[1] He therefore rejects its usual Latin and military[2] derivation, as entirely foreign to the idea conveyed. Again **XAPXNOYMIC** is named as the First Decanus in Leo, and this title actually occurs around a serpent having a human head, whence issue rays, presented in front face; the name sometimes being written **XOΛXNOYBIC**, rendered by Salmasius "All-golden." A Greek astrologer, quoted by him (De An. Climact.), states:—"There are in each Sign three *Decani* appointed, of various forms, one *holding an axe*, the others represented differently. These figures engraved on rings are charms against accidents, as Teucer says; as do other great astrologers of his times."[3] This notice of their attributes shows

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[1] Not only were the Decani engraved on gems and rings in order to avert mishaps, but also were figured the Signs, and the stars rising together with them, or παρανατελλοντες. These images were called Στοιχεια: hence the persons were called Στοιχειωματικοι who engraved such gems with the figures of the Decani, Signs, &c., using certain ceremonies and under the inspection of the particular star of the Horoscope. Thus Epiphanius speaks of the Sun, the Moon, and the other planets, and the heavenly Στοιχεια, that is, the figures of the constellations or μορφωσεις formed by the imaginary collocation of the stars. Again Epiphanius talks of "the stars vainly imagined after the fashion of figures εις ρυθμον στοιχειων, which they call the Signs Ζωδια." Diodorus distinguishes between the planets and the στοιχεια or fixed stars; so the word exactly answers to the modern "constellations."

Ptolemy in the "Carpus," Aphorism IX*, observes "the figures (ειδη = στοιχεια) in rise and decline are affected by the heavenly bodies, wherefore the στοιχειωματικοι employ them, by observing the entrance of the planets into them;" where the Arabian translation gives "talisman-makers" for the term στοιχειωματικοι.

[2] Answering to our sergeant.

[3] *Myriogeneses.*—Scaliger (Not. ad Manil., p. 487) gives the ascendants in each sign as represented by the Arabian astrologers, as they pretended to have received them from the Egyptians. Those of the first Decanus in

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plainly one of the number to have been the old Babylonian god described by the prophet Baruch (Epistle, 13, 14). "He hath a sceptre in his hand like a man, like a judge of the kingdom—he hath in his hand a sword and an *axe*." Thus, too, do I understand a curious stone (Praun gems) engraved in a late Roman style, with Mercury seated on a throne and invested with the laurel crown and thunderbolt of Jupiter; at his side a ram; around is the legend ЕПΠТА (*sic*) **XPYCOC**, which last has hitherto baffled conjecture as to its true meaning. But fortune lately brought into my possession a cameo bearing the Delphic **E** crowned by a fillet, with the word **XPYCOY** beneath; and since that I have discovered another almost identical, figured by Caylus in his invaluable 'Recueil d'Antiquités' (vii. pl. 27). As there can be no doubt that this signifies the "Golden Five," the most sacred of numbers, and represents the golden numeral offered by Livia Augusta at Delphi, so in the Praun gem we discover the "Golden Seven" accompanying the god to whom it peculiarly belonged,—

> "——— Testudo resonare *septem*
> Callida nervis."

Indeed from the beginning strange adaptations of ancient types were made. The followers of Simon Magus, says Irenæus, had

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Aries will suffice, by the truly mediæval nature of the representations themselves, to demonstrate the falsity of their pretensions, and the more recent origin of such figures.

Aries, the first Decanus Asiccan of Mars, gives courage and impudence.

1. Man holding in his right hand a pruning-hook, in his left a cross-bow.
2. Dog-headed man, with right hand extended, a wand in his left.
3. Man holding out various ornaments in his right hand, his left placed in his girdle.
4. Man with curly hair, in his right a hawk, in his left a whip.
5. Two men, one cleaving wood with an axe, the other holding a sceptre.
6. A king crowned, in his right the orb, in his left the sceptre.
7. Man in armour holding an arrow.
8. Man with a helmet, in his right hand a cross-bow.
9. Man bareheaded, a sword in his left.
10. Man spearing a boar.

All these types were expressive of corresponding inclinations and qualities in the native under each degree. But Scaliger explains, and very plausibly, many of the compound figures holding zodiacal signs in their hands, and usually classed among the gnostical, as genuine representations of these Myriogeneses; that is, personifications of the influence of each individual degree.

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images of him made in the likeness of Jupiter, of the Moon, and of Minerva, and to these images they paid adoration.

"Taaut, the great god of the Phœnicians," says Sanchoniathon, "to express the character of Saturn or Kronos, made his image having four eyes, two before, two behind, open and closed, and four wings, two expanded, two folded. The eyes denote that the god sees in sleep, and sleeps in waking; the position of the wings that he flies in rest, and rests in flying."

As the genius of the planet Saturn was held by the Talmudists to be good and pure, not so those of the other planets, the four-winged genius already noticed, so frequently repeated in the character of a guardian angel, may be considered the representative of Saturn. He, as the direct inspirer of the Law and the Prophets, had peculiar claims to the veneration of the Alexandrian Kabbalists. Here we discover the reason why Valentinus appoints that planet for the proper mansion of the Creator Ildabaoth, he who spoke through the Prophets and gave the Law in the Wilderness.

ISIAC SYMBOLS.

The best-detailed account extant of the figures and symbols employed in the worship of Isis when still in all its glory (during the second century) is the description of the Procession given by Apuleius, himself one of the initiated (Met. xi.) "Next flow on the crowds of persons initiated into the divine mysteries; men and women, of every rank and of all ages, shining in the pure whiteness of a linen robe; the latter having their dripping hair enveloped in a transparent covering, the former with their heads shaven clean, and their bare crowns shining white; the earthly stars of the nocturnal rite raising as they went along a shrill tinkling with sistra of bronze, silver, and even of gold. But the chief performers in the ceremony were those nobles who, clad in a tight-fitting robe of linen descending from the waist down to the heels, carried in the procession the glorious symbols of the most potent deities. The first held out at arm's length a lamp diffusing before him a brilliant light, not by any means similar in form to those in ordinary use for illuminating our evening meals, but a golden bowl supporting a more ample blaze in the

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midst of its broad expanse. The second, similarly robed, held up in both hands the altar which derives its name from the beneficent providence of the supreme goddess. The third marched along, bearing aloft a palm-branch, the leaves formed of thin gold, and the caduceus of Hermes. The fourth displayed the emblem of Justice, the figure of the left hand with the palm open, which, on account of its natural inactivity, and its being endowed with neither skill nor cunning, has been judged a more fitting emblem of Justice than the right hand. The same minister also carried a small golden vessel made in a round form like an udder, out of which he poured libations of milk. The fifth carried a winnowing-fan piled up with golden sprigs. The last of all bore a vast wine-jar. Immediately after these came the Deities, condescending to walk upon human feet, the first among them raising terribly on high his Dog's head and neck; that messenger between heaven and hell displaying a face alternately black as the night, and golden as the day, in his left the caduceus, in his right waving a green palm-branch. His steps were closely followed by a Cow raised into an upright position—this cow being the fruitful emblem of the Universal Parent, the goddess—which one of the happy train bore, with majestic steps, supported on his shoulders. By another was carried the Coffer, containing the mystic articles, and closely concealing the secret things of the glorious religion. Another bore in his happy bosom the awful figure of the Supreme Deity, not represented in the form of a beast either tame or wild, nor of a bird, nor again in the shape of a human being, but *ingeniously devised*, and inspiring awe through its very strangeness—that ineffable symbol of a deeper mystery, and ever to be shrouded in the profoundest silence. But next came, borne in precisely the same manner, a small vase made of burnished gold, and most skilfully wrought out into a hemispherical bottom, embossed externally with strange Egyptian devices. Its mouth, but slightly raised, was extended into a spout, and projected considerably beyond the body of the bowl;[1] whilst on the opposite side, widening as it

[1] The Hindoo Lingum-Yoni, or symbols of the Active and Passive Nature in conjunction, is represented in stone as a round shallow bowl, with a long projecting lip tapering to a point: from the centre rises an obtuse

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receded to a capacious opening, it was affixed to the handle, on which was seated an Asp wreathed into a knot, and lifting up on high its streaked, swollen, scaly neck."

The "udder-shaped Vase" exactly describes that so often seen upon the gems, and which *Matter* so strangely explains as the vessel containing the *sins* of the deceased—a most unlikely subject to figure on an amulet designed to attract the favour of the heavenly powers. More plausible is Köhler's conjecture, that it is no more than one of the earthen pots used for fixing around the circumference of the irrigating-wheel still employed for raising the Nile water to fertilize the adjacent gardens;[1] and certainly the bands around its top favour this interpretation. In fact, we have an analogous deification of a vessel in the Canopus, the vase that held the same water for drinking. The *Winnowing-fan*[2] is frequently represented placed upon this vase; and the golden *Bowl* serving for a lamp often forms one in the group of emblems occupying the face of such talismans.[3]

It seems to follow as a matter of course that the *Anubis*, in order to exhibit alternately an ebon and a golden visage, must have had two heads in the image seen by Apuleius, just as he is figured holding the caduceus and palm on certain Basilidan gems. That mysterious shape, too awful to be described, but whose nature is so darkly hinted at as neither beast, bird, nor human, one is tempted to believe, from these very expressions, was a compound of all the three—in short, our friend *Abraxas* himself. The image must have been of small size, seeing that it was carried hidden in the bosom of the priest's robe; and my suspicion is confirmed by the existence in the late Mertens Col-

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cone. Now this is the exact shape of a bronze lamp from Herculanum (Caylus, vii. pl. 33), but out of the centre springs a bent fore-finger (digitus obscœnus), serving for a handle to carry it by; and from the sides project the three arms of the Egyptian *Tau*. This must have belonged to the Isis worship in that town—no doubt as popular there as we know it was at Pompeii.

[1] "Fecundating Isis with the seed of Osiris," to use the antique phraseology.

[2] In the Greek marriage ceremony the winnowing-fan, piled with all sorts of fruit, was placed on the bride's head. The same agricultural article, a broad shallow basket, was the cradle of the infant Bacchus—the "mystica vannus Iacchi."

[3] The sistrum also evidently borrows its peculiar outline from the Hindoo *Yoni*.

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lection of a bronze, five inches in height, found in the south of France, and thus described in the Catalogue: "No. 2062. Statuette of *Iao* standing, armed with cuirass, and buckler, and whip: his head in the form of a cock's, his legs terminating in serpents."

MATERIALS AND STYLE.

Gnostic Intagli are the sole relics of the glyptic art lingering through the last two centuries of the Roman Empire, if we except a few rude figures of the goddess Roma, Victories, and Eagles. As may be well supposed, the art displayed in their designs is at its lowest ebb, being itself but a degenerate scion of the debased Egyptian School of Alexandria. The engraving must for the most part have been executed by means of a coarse wheel like that characterizing the Sassanian stamps then generally used in Persia, a country itself the source of many of the ideas expressed in these figures and legends. The choice Indian Sards, Nicoli, and Amethysts, which embellished an earlier period, are replaced here by stones the produce of the very regions that were the cradle of the creed—the Jasper of Egypt, dark green, mottled, or yellow; the plasma, usually of bad quality, passing from a yellowish-green into the commonest calcedony; and, quite as abundantly, the loadstone. Indeed, the Jasper and the Loadstone,[1] the special minerals at the fountains of the Magic art, Egypt and Assyria, had from time immemorial been adjudged the peculiar vehicles for the exhibition of talismans.

So constant is this rule, that Gnostic types, when found well executed and in fine stones, as is sometimes the case, will on examination always prove to belong to the Cinque-Cento age, a time when all subjects pertaining to astrology, or the Kabala, were again produced in vast numbers, in compliance with the

[1] The true etymology of the much-disputed word Cameo, in Henry III.'s time written Camahut, is to be sought in the Persian Camahen, loadstone or fibrous hæmatite, the usual material for Babylonian cylinders, and in use there down to the times of the Cufic signets. The Arabs, knowing no other motive for the engraving of stones than their conversion into talismans, gave the name of the one most frequently used to the whole class; and the Crusaders introduced it into all European languages in this sense. Matthew Paris has "lapides quos *cameos* vulgariter appellamus:" which marks its foreign origin.

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ruling superstition. To this and the next century ought to be referred the large oval Jaspers engraved with the mummy-like figure of Osiris or Ormuzd, and the field occupied with stars and modern Hebrew letters. A large amethyst, formerly in my possession, engraved with the hawk-head, ithyphallic, Phre, holding on his extended right hand a small cynocephalus, and standing on the coiled serpent, in the field IAΩ, was a most remarkable instance of this resuscitation of ancient ideas; for the execution was worthy of the best times, furnishing in itself a certain proof that the work could not belong to the Gnostic era. Pastes of such subjects do not exist, for a sufficient reason—the *material* of a talisman is quite as essential to its virtue as the *sigil* to be engraved upon it; the cause of which Camillo Leonardo shall hereafter explain in his own words. Again, the genuine stones were so cheap themselves, and the engravings produced so expeditiously, and with such little care, that it would not have been worth while to counterfeit them in another substance. The sole exception that has come under my notice to the inferior character of the stones thus employed is the singular tablet in Garnet already described.

THE EVIL EYE: φθονος.

The belief in the power of the envious eye to inflict mischief was universal amongst the ancients. It is needless to adduce passages from the classics[1] to support this statement, for even St. Paul reckons this action of the mind working through the eye amongst other crimes of the greatest heinousness. But the actual manner of its operation upon the sufferer I have found nowhere explained, except in the following passage of Heliodorus (iii. 8): "'Tell me, my good Calasiris, what is the complaint that has attacked your daughter?' 'You ought not to be surprised,' I replied, 'if, when she was leading the procession in the presence of so vast an assemblage, she has drawn upon herself some *envious eye*.' Whereupon, smiling ironically, 'Do you then,' asked he, 'like the vulgar in general, believe in the

[1] For example, Apollonius Rhodius makes a skilful use of the notion, where he describes how Medea by her basilisk-glance wrought the death of Talus, the brazen man, who defended the Cretan coast.

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existence of such a fascination?' 'As much as I do in any other fact,' I replied; 'and the thing is thus: this air that surrounds us, passing, as it were through a strainer, through the eyes, the nostrils, the breath, and the other passages into the inward parts, and the external properties rushing in together with it, whatever be its quality as it flows in, of the same nature is the effect that it disseminates in the recipients; so that when any one looks upon Beauty with envy, he fills the circumambient air with a malignant property, and diffuses upon his neighbour the breath coming from himself replete with bitterness, and this, being, as it is, of a most subtile nature, penetrates through into the very bones and marrow. Hence envy has often turned itself into a true disease, and has received the distinctive name of Fascination (*βασκανια*). Consider, too, Charicles, how many have been infected with ophthalmia, how many with other pestilential diseases, not from any contact with those affected, or from sharing the same bed or the same table, but merely from breathing the same air. Let, too, and above everything else, the origin of love be a support to my argument, which owes its first beginning to the sight, which shoots, like arrows, the passion into the soul; and this with very good reason, for of all the passages and senses of the body, the sight is the most easily excited, and the most fervent, and therefore the most susceptible as regards external emanations, by means of its natural fiery spirit attracting to itself the visits of Love. And if you wish for a proof drawn from natural history and recorded in the sacred books: the bird yellow-hammer cures the jaundice; and if the person so affected should but look at the bird, the latter at once endeavours to escape and shuts its eyes, not, as some think, because it begrudges the benefit to the sick man, but because if looked upon it is forced by its nature to attract the disease like an exhalation into its own body; and therefore shuns the glance as much as a blow. And of serpents: the basilisk, does not he, as you may have heard, kill and blast whatever comes in his way by his eye and breath alone? And if some give the stroke of the evil eye even to those they love and are well disposed towards, one must not be surprised, for people of an envious disposition do not what they wish, but what their nature compels them to.'"

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TALISMANS AND AMULETS.

Although these terms are usually confounded together, their proper meaning is entirely distinct. Talisman is but the corruption in the Arabian mouth of the Greek Αποτέλεσμα, the influence of a planet or sign upon the *native*;[1] hence astrology is called η Αποτελεσματικη. Now the influence of every degree in each sign was typified by a fantastic figure or group, painted in the table of Myriogeneses. (Scaliger, as above quoted.) Hence by a natural transition the symbol itself usurped the name, Apotelesma, of the idea it was intended to portray. A talisman was therefore necessarily a *sigil* engraved in stone or metal. An excellent illustrative example is that figured by Raspe, No. 354, where[2] Abraxas, carrying the Nile-vase, is encircled by the ungrammatical invocation προς παντας ανθρωπον δοται χαριν τοις φερουσιν, "Give unto the bearers favour in the sight of all men." Hence the talisman served both to procure love, and to avert mischief from its possessor. The latter alone was the object of the *Amuletum*, a word derived from *amolior*, "to do away with," or to baffle. Many natural objects, both animal and vegetable, the stranger they were the better, had this power of counteracting the all-dreaded Evil Eye; and of such the most striking example is the fascinum or phallus, or the fist closed so as to convey an indecent idea. Pliny uses the word of the Cyclamen:[3] "which ought to be planted in every house, if it be indeed true that where it is planted poisonous drugs have no power to harm; hence they call the flower *Amuletum*." Again, speaking of amber: "Infantibus adalligari *amuleti* modo prodest."

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[1] A talisman not unfrequent, both in bas-reliefs and gems, against this influence, represents the dreaded Eye itself as the centre of a circle of symbols radiating from it, and all tending to baffle its effect. Thus a sard (Praun gems) shows the Eye surrounded by a thunderbolt, lion, hare, dog, scorpion, stag, serpent, and owl.

[2] From this example we may be able to conjecture the purport of many of these long prayers in unknown tongues, which if interpreted would probably often contain a meaning of the same nature as the above.

[3] "A nostris Tuber Terrae vocatur; in omnibus serenda domibus, si verum est ubi sata sit nihil nocere mala medicamenta, *amuletum* vocant: narrantque et ebrietatem repræsentari addita in vinum."

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The skull of an ass set up on a pole in the midst of a corn-field was a potent amulet against blight; and this usage long held its ground in Tuscany, for Boccaccio makes an amusing use of it in one of his stories.[1] Again, Hesychius records that Pisistratus set up in the Acropolis the figure of a grasshopper, or mule-cricket (grillo), as a καταχηνη, or charm against the Evil Eye; and this insect is perpetually repeated upon gems with a similar intent.[2]

That the custom of wearing talismans and *spells*, *i.e.*, scrolls written with charms, and folded up within a small case of metal or leather, for suspension, was as prevalent under the Lower Empire as it still is amongst the Arabs and African Moslems, with their "grigris," appears, not to quote others, from this passage of Gregory Nazianzen (Or. xl. 18): "Your child has no need of amulets and spells, in company wherewith the Evil One also enters, robbing God of his glory amongst the lighter-minded: give to him the Trinity (in baptism), that great and glorious mystery."[3] And the Greek epigrammatists, with whom,

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[1] Where the lady uses it to telegraph to her lover when her husband is gone from home, by turning it in a particular direction.

[2] It was only the first stroke of the Evil Eye that was fatal: hence whatever diverted it from the person in that moment destroyed its effect. For such an end what could serve better than anything odd, strange, obscene, or unlikely to be exposed to view? Hence the phallus naturally suggested itself among the first, and was followed by other objects bearing a fancied analogy to the idea it conveyed.

[3] Thus to protect oneself against evil influences was a practice going back to times immemorial. Anaxilas describes his Athenian fop as wearing the "Ephesian spell," handsomely printed upon strips of parchment,

εν σκυταριοις ραπτοισι φερων
Εφεσια γραμματα καλα.

The Jews, on the re-establishment of their kingdom, adopted the custom, substituting for the Ephesian charms certain verses out of the Law, which being supposed of power to avert all evil and mischief were called phylacteries (φυλακτηρια), safe-guards, or amulets. The same notion yet exists amongst Mohammedans, who employ verses of the Koran with the similar belief in their efficacy.

The Bulla, a gold case shaped like a heart, worn round the neck by Roman boys, was nothing but a similar charm, and probably contained some written spell, for the usage came from the Etruscans; hence its periphrasis "Etruscum Aurum." The poor had a similar amulet, but in leather, "nodus de paupere loro." Besides the bulla, a number of other objects made of thin gold plate, and hollow, were strung about the child's neck, as their portraits often show: from their clinking together, termed *Crepundia*.

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as with the wits of Molière's days, physicians were ever fair game, bring in the superstition for their benefit; for instance:

Ερμογενη τον ιατρον ιδων Διοφαντος εν υπνοις
ουκετ' ανηγερθη και περιαμμα φερων.

"In slumber sound was Diophantus laid,
When a black dream Hermogenes portrayed:
He saw the fateful leech, and woke no more,
Spite of the guardian amulet he wore."

Most of the Gnostic stones have clearly been intended for wear as amulets, and not for setting in rings, for which they are unfitted by their large dimensions. I suspect that usually they were carried loose in the pouch, or zona, to be produced when required as credentials between the initiated, and a means of introducing one *illuminato*, or *ami de la lumière*, to the other. To such a custom, derived from the more ancient tessera, by means of which the general circulated amongst his troops the word for the day, St. John evidently alludes in the passage, "To him *that overcometh* (*i.e.* the new convert) will I give a white stone,[1] and in the stone a *new name* written, which no man knoweth save he that receiveth it." A plain allusion to the *white carnelian* (calcedony) convex gems, covered on both sides with interminable legends, the attempt to interpret which will, after all his pains, convince the antiquary of the truth of the "sainted seer's" concluding declaration.[2] That they were merely carried about the person is also shown by the notice that the Princess *Badoura's* talisman, "a carnelian engraved with strange figures and letters," was carried by her in a small purse, sewed on to her jewelled girdle.

As to their actual manufacture, Epiphanius records that *Manes*, besides his "Mysteries" and "Treasury," wrote likewise a treatise on *Astrology*; "for these sectaries," adds the good father, "are so far from eschewing the forbidden art, that the head and front of their boast is the *science of astronomy*;[3] and, moreover, amulets, that is to say, things worn round the neck (Periapta), and in-

[1] ψηφον; properly signifying a gem.

[2] The significant word BAINXω, "a prize," seen on some of these stones, proves that they were intended to be given "to him that overcometh," *i. e.*, has passed through all the tests preceding initiation.

[3] Another and an independent tes-

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cantations, and such like trickery." The use of Periapta in their original sense is yet kept up amongst the German Jews; for when the sick man is at the last gasp, the attendants bind round his head and arms certain knotted leather thongs. Similarly, a Jew about to be executed, thus prepares him to meet his death.

That all talismans were primarily intended to be tied upon, or hung from the person, is sufficiently indicated by the generic name of such matters, viz., *Periapta:* "Things for hanging round;" in fact, the only Gnostic stone known to me as retaining its antique mounting is one adapted for such a purpose. It is a Red Jasper, oval-shaped, engraved on one face with a mummy having its head radiated, type of the soul released and glorified, inscribed **ABPACAZ,** on the other the usual figure of Iao with his name below. The stone, not quite an inch long, is set in a rude frame of gold, having a broad loop soldered on the top, for suspension, exactly as in the huge medallions of the same date (after Constantine's reign). This unique example exists amongst the miscellaneous gems in the British Museum, where also I recognised many and the finest of the Gnostic engravings figured more than two centuries ago by Chiflet; another proof of the well-known rule that the curiosities of the whole world ultimately gravitate towards London, as their centre point of attraction. Amongst these particular attention is due to the large oval sard above alluded to, covered with legends, agreeing exactly with those on the Herz garnet and Chiflet's calcedony already introduced; a repetition proving the importance of the formula, which was either intended for recital at a sacrifice or to accompany the deceased into his tomb for the same purpose as the several prayers prescribed in the Schema of the Ophites. Another singular relic belonging to the later phase of the religion is a large egg-shaped calcedony, presenting the type of the lion-headed man,[1] surrounded by a long legend in the latest Palmyrene, or rather Cufic, character; the whole rude in the extreme, and precisely agreeing with the style of the last Sassanian stamps.

timony to what an extent these designs were in their origin astrological merely.

[1] May not this figure be the great god of the ancient Arabians, Ourotal (God of Light), whom Herodotus takes for Dionysus, and thus again equivalent to the later Pater Bromius?

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SEAL OF S. SERVATIUS; MAESTRICHT CATHEDRAL.

(p. 239.)

Jasper set in silver: actual size. Obverse: the letters in the field seem intended for **Ο Α(γιος) Γ(εοργιος)**. Reverse: phonetic spelling for **Μοιρα μελαινη ως οφις**: a spelling of which other examples are known.

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LOCALITIES WHERE FOUND AT PRESENT.

These gems, plates of bronze and lead, rude medallions engraved with similar devices, and even tesseræ in terra-cotta, were placed together with the corpse in his last resting-place, as a safeguard against demons. Of such medals, excessively rare, I have figured (Pl. III. 5, XI. 4) two examples found in the south of France. The collection that supplied me with them possesses, or rather, alas! possessed, also a large finger-ring in ivory, the face of which presents the monogram of Christ between the A and Ω, exactly as it figures on the coins of the Gallic princes Constans and Magnentius, but accompanied by the addition ABPACAZ, showing that the owner regarded the two personages as one and the same divinity.[1] The tomb of Maria, wife of the most orthodox Honorius, contained a gold plaque engraved with the names of angels, besides sundry strange figures carved out of agate and crystal. On account of its singular interest as the sole description extant of the rifling an imperial sepulchre, I have subjoined Fauno's full and particular details.[2]

The antique cemeteries of Provence supply them yet in great abundance. Gnosticism early took root and flourished in Southern Gaul, as the treatise of Irenæus directed against it attests; and this, it may be, in consequence of the great affinity its original sources bore to the Mithraic and the Druidical systems. Later still, in the middle of the fourth century, a Gnostic sect, the Priscillianists, spread rapidly over the same region. These religionists took their name from their founder, Priscillian, Bishop of Avila, in Spain, who was put to death for heresy by the British emperor Magnus Maximus. That Spain also had, long before Priscillian's times, received and fostered the Basilidan creed, though so remote from its fountain head, appears from a passage in Jerome's 29th letter to Theodora: "Our friend Licinius, when that most foul heresy of Basilides was raging throughout Spain, and like a plague and pestilence laying waste

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[1] The title indeed may have been used here in its primary sense of "Blessed Name."

[2] And in Sebert's coffin, when opened, lay his very episcopal ring, for which he had chosen an Abraxas, doubtless recommended to him by the virtues Camillo shall enumerate.

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all the province between the Pyrenees and the ocean, held fast the purity of the Church's faith, far from receiving Armagel, Barbelo, Abraxas, Balsamus, the ridiculous Leusiboras, and the other similar monstrosities."

It is more than probable that such doctrines lurked unnoticed amongst the original natives of Gaul during the reigns of the Arian Gothic kings, and did no more than revive and again flourish vigorously in the Manicheism of the Albigenses during the twelfth century. The mere fact of these sectaries having been persecuted by the Catholics so cruelly, like the Waldenses somewhat later, does not by any means prove them equally good Protestants as the latter, which most people nowadays take for granted. (See Manicheism in the Middle Ages, p. 182.)

Some traces of Gnosticism probably yet survive amongst the mysterious sects of Mount Lebanon, the Druses, and the Ansayreh. As late as Justinian's reign Procopius informs us that above a million of Polytheists, Manicheans, and Samaritans (the latter a Gnostic sect), were destroyed in Syria during the persecutions carried on by this pedantic bigot; and, as that region fell shortly afterwards under the dominion of the more tolerant Arabians, who never interfered with the religion of their tributaries so long as they paid their tribute punctually, these doctrines may well have come down to the present day, considering the secluded position of the people and the vitality of every well-defined system of religious ideas.

RECOGNITION BY MEANS OF SYMBOLS.

Our word *Symbol* is curiously derived. It properly means a contribution of each member towards the cost of a Greek drinking-party. For this purpose every one pledged his signet-ring to the caterer, and afterwards redeemed it by paying his quota of the expense. Hence the Romans of Plautus's time called the ring itself *symbolum*. As the signet was used for the most trustworthy of credentials, symbolum came to signify the credential itself;[1] hence in ecclesiastical language *symbolum* stands for

[1] Caylus figures (v. pl. 55) a right hand of the natural size in bronze, inscribed on the open palm with ΣΥΜΒΟΛΟΝ ΠΡΟΣ ΟΥΕΛΑΤΝΙΟΥΣ,

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creed, e. g. Symbolum Apostolicum. At length, in modern Latinity, it degenerated into the sign expressive of any idea, more particularly of one religious. *Emblem* again, at first a little silver chasing, intended for letting into plate as an ornamentation of the surface—whence the term Ἐμβλημα—as the designs were always mythological, came, by a similar transition, to imply the allegorical expression for some personage of that class. There is, however, a difference in their meaning; emblem expressing more fully, symbol merely hinting at the idea conveyed. Thus, the *emblem* of victory is a winged female holding a palm-branch, the *symbol* of victory the palm alone.

From the very nature of things it was a necessity for the members of a secret society to have some means for recognising a brother that should escape the detection of the uninitiated. Certain passages in the classics have made me suspect that all partners in the Eleusinian Mysteries were taught some such secret. Certain it is that our popular notion about the "Masonic grip" was equally current in the days of Epiphanius, as applied to the Gnostics. "On the arrival of any stranger belonging to the same belief they have a *sign*, given by the man to the woman, and *vice versa*. In holding out the hand, under pretence of saluting each other, they feel and tickle it in a particular manner underneath the palm, and so discover if the new-comer belongs to the same sect. Thereupon, however poor they may be, they serve up to him a sumptuous feast, with abundance of meats and wine. And after that they are well filled, and begin to be merry, the entertainer rises, leaves his wife behind, bidding her 'Show thy charity unto this our brother,' &c.:" carrying his hospitality to an extent which, in our selfish times, no *brother* would have the audacity to expect from the most enthusiastic upholder of the fraternity.

It is curious to observe how the Freemasons have retained

"Credentials to the Velaunii." These were a Gallic nation, situated near Antibes. The wrist at the section is closed, forming a base, so that the hand could stand of itself upright.

A pair of clasped hands—symbol of concord—were usually sent from one nation or army to another. "Miserat civitas Lingonum veteri instituto dona legionibus *dextras* hospitii insignia" (Tac. Hist. I. 54). From the nature of the case, such presents must have been made of the precious metals, and therefore none have been preserved.

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many of the Gnostic figures in their symbolical pictures and insignia. There we at once recognize the erect serpent, the hemispherical bowl, the inscribed columns, Solomon's seal; and the suspended G is, in all likelihood, nothing more than the famous Delphic Ε misunderstood. St. John is their patron, whom the ancient mystics claimed as their especial apostle. All these emblems may yet be seen publicly paraded, presided over by the sun, moon, and planets, and combined in a fashion irresistibly reminding one of a Basilidan diagram. Nay more, on a basalt intaglio figured by Dr. Walsh (pl. 8), Michael actually appears as a hawk-headed and winged youth, holding in each hand a mason's level, with the legend ΔΥΝΑΜΙC ΜΙΧΑΗΛ; whilst the oft-repeated Harpocrates, with his finger on his lips, significantly betokens the profound secrecy demanded from the Free and Accepted. Indeed, a distinguished official of the craft, in looking over the plates of Chiflet's "Apistopistus," confessed to me his astonishment at recognizing there so many of the outward and visible signs of his brotherhood. It must also be borne in mind that our Freemasons claim descent from the Templars, whose name, indeed, the French branch yet keep up, and assert an unbroken succession of G.M.s from the very foundation of the Order, spite of its supposed extinction. Lessing even maintains that the name *Mason*, in German *Masson*, has nothing whatever to do with the English meaning of the term, but comes from the old word *Massoney*, a lodge of the knights; called also *Messoney*, or "The Round Table," for which he cites Agricola, an authority but a century removed from the suppression of the Order. Hence the old Templar-churches at Bologna and Milan still retain their title "della Magione," *i. e.*, de la Masson.

The Templars were suppressed by a Bull of Clement V., in 1312, extorted through the influence of Philippe le Bel, his patron and master, on charges similar to those that had led to the extirpation of the Albigenses exactly a century before. In these accusations there was doubtless some truth, although only taken up as a pretext for confiscating the wealth of the Order, which had long excited the cupidity of the necessitous sovereigns of Europe. Von Hammer (Mines de l'Orient, vi.) has attempted to substantiate, on the evidence of existing monuments, all the

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charges brought against the Order of "sharing in the apostasy, idolatry, and impurity of the Gnostics, and also of the Ophites." In this, following Nicolai, he contends that the Baphomet, the pretended object of their worship, meant βαφη Μητιδος, "Baptism of the Spirit;" and he discovers an endless variety of Gnostic emblems in the *bracteates* turned up occasionally on the sites of their preceptories, and in the sculptures adorning the churches of the Order. But the mystic coins are merely bracteates issued by the bishops of Suabia and Westphalia, and the Brandenburg Markgraves; whilst the Baphomet, which, as it is set forth in the indictment, "they worshipped in the shape of an old man's head with a long beard," is perhaps merely the name Mahomet, corrupted in the mouths of the ignorant French witnesses. But this curious subject will be discussed at length in the Section "On the Preservation of Gnostic Symbols amongst the Freemasons."

SEPULCRUM MARIÆ HONORII.[1]

"In February, 1544, in the chapel of the King of France which is now building in S. Peter's, after the new plan designed by Julius II., they came upon, in excavating, a marble coffin which, from the things found therein, was clearly known to be the tomb of Maria wife of the Emperor Honorius. Of the corpse there was nothing indeed left save the teeth, the hair, and the two leg-bones. From the robes, which were interwoven with gold, and from the head-tire, which was a cloth of silk and gold, there was extracted, by melting them, forty pounds of the finest gold. Within the coffin lay a silver box, broken into three or four pieces, one and a half foot long and eight inches deep, with many things inside which we shall particularly describe. There were vases and different articles in crystal, big and little, thirty in all; amongst which were like two cups, not very large, one round, the other of an oval shape, with most beautiful figures in intaglio of middling depth (mezzo-cavo); and a snail-shell (or rather nautilus), also of crystal, fitted up

[1] From M. L. Fauno's Ant. di Roma (ed. 1553), v. p. 154.

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for a lamp in fine gold, with which, in the first place, is covered over the mouth of the shell, there being only left a hole in the middle for pouring in the oil; by the side of which hole is seen, fixed by a nail, a golden fly that moves to and fro, for covering and uncovering this hole. In the same way there is also the nozzle with beak (pippio) for holding the wick, drawn out long and sharpened with the greatest elegance, and so fastened to the crystal that it appears all one piece naturally. Moreover, the cover is similarly well made. The shape of the snail-shell is like a great sea-shell (a nautilus), encompassed all around with its points, which in this vase are polished and very smooth, so excellently worked is the crystal. There were also vases and different articles in agate, with certain little animals, eight in all; and amongst them two very beautiful vases, one like those glass ampullæ made big and squat for holding oil or such like liquid, so made, so beautiful and thin, that it is a wonder to behold. The other is made in the shape of those brass ladles with long handles serving at Rome to draw water out of the cisterns,[1] and is supposed to be a vessel used by the ancients in their sacrifices. Next were four little vessels in gold, of different kinds; and another little vase in gold, with a cover set round with jewels. A little gold heart that had been a pendant, with jewels set in it. A buckle of gold, with six gems of different kinds set in it; and twenty-four other buckles in gold, of various shapes, with little gems set in them; and forty-eight rings and hoops[2] of gold of various patterns, and one of them in red bone with various gems. Also three little animals in red bone. Also two ear-drops in emerald or plasma, with two jacinths. Four small crosses with red and green stones. A pendant in the form of a bunch of grapes, made of purple stones. Eight other little gold pendants of different sorts, with gems set in them.[3] Three little gold crosses set with emeralds. A piece of a small fine

[1] This was the *Ligula*, used to ladle the mixed wine and water out of the standing crater.

[2] Verghe, verga, like the old French verge, signifies the plain round wire forming a ring, *i. e.*, a plain hoop without any head.

[3] The remains of a string of crepundia. Maria died at the age of four, being so early affianced to the young emperor.

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necklace, with certain green stones strung upon it. Another little gold necklace, with twenty-two beads of plasma. Another necklace, with twelve beads of sapphires cut almond-shaped. Another little necklace of gold wire, twisted up (raccolto), but broken in four pieces. Two small buttons in gold; fourteen little gold-wire rings, like those of a mail-coat; three more crosses, with some emeralds; and a round gold plate like an Agnus Dei (*i. e.* a disk three inches in diameter), with these letters around it: STILICHO . VIVAT. Two bracelets (maniche or maniglie) of gold, set with certain red and green stones. Two large pins or stiletti for the hair; one in gold nearly a palm long (eight inches), inscribed with these words: DOMINVS HONORIVS DOMINA MARIA. The other in silver, without inscription. There were also several fragments of emeralds and other stones. Also silver nails, partly flat, partly in relief (the heads?), which had fastened a cover of silver upon a little coffer. Also a small plate of gold, with these words written, or rather scratched, in Greek: MICHAEL . GABRIEL . RAPHAEL . VRIEL. We have particularly described all these objects, because Claudian, a poet of those times, declares that to the Empress Maria were sent rare presents from Honorius her betrothed, which perchance may have formed the greater part of these things. The exact words of the poet are,—

> '——— Jam munera nuptæ
> Præparat, et pulcros Mariæ sed luce minores
> Eligit ornatus: quidquid venerabilis olim
> Livia, divorumque nurus gessere superbæ.' "

This account enables us to form some notion of the treasures deposited, in a greater or less degree, in all the tombs of important personages, more especially in Asia Minor. It likewise sufficiently accounts for the furious onslaught made upon the tombs all over the Roman world, as soon as the conversion of the empire had destroyed the ancient veneration for the manes and the abodes of the dead—a profanation which Gregory Theologus, with a degree of taste and good feeling most unlooked-for in a Greek saint, has attacked in one hundred and eighty-two curious, and often poetical, epigrams.

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GNOSTIC TALISMANS PLACED IN SARCOPHAGI.

Some light may be thrown upon the motive for placing in the coffin such formulæ, inscribed, sometimes on tablets of lead or on plates of bronze, or more commonly upon the stones we are now considering, from the account given by Epiphanius (Hær. xxxvi.) of the ceremonies by which the Heracleonites prepared the dying brother for his safe passage to the next world. They sprinkled his head with water mingled with oil and opobalsamum, repeating the formula used by the Marcosians in baptism, in order that the inner man of the defunct thus prepared might escape the vigilance of the Principalities and Powers, and mount upwards unseen by any, to the Pleroma whence he originally descended. They used therefore to instruct the dying man, that when his soul came before the Powers he was to address them after this form:—"I, the son from the Father, the Father pre-existing, and the son in the present time, am come to behold all things, both of others and my own, and things not altogether of others, but belonging to Achamoth (Wisdom), who is feminine and hath created them for herself. But I deduce my own origin from the Pre-existent One, and I am going back again unto my own, from whence I have descended." By virtue of this formula he will escape the Powers and reach the Demiurgus in the eighth sphere, whom he must address with the words, "I am a precious vessel, superior to the female Power that made you: inasmuch as your mother knows not her own origin, but I know myself and I know whence I am, and I invoke the incorruptible Wisdom, who is in the Father, and is the mother of your mother that hath no father, nay more, not even a male partner, but being a female springing from a female hath created you, though she herself knows not her own mother, but believes herself to exist alone. But I invoke her *Mother*.[1]" At this address the Demiurgus is

[1] Achamoth, the Sapandomad of Zoroaster, the "Wisdom" of the later Jews, whose nature is fully described in Wisdom of Solomon vii. 25: "She is the spirit of the virtue of God, the pure emanation of the brightness of the Almighty; the brightness of the eternal light, the mirror without spot of his majesty, the image of his goodness," &c. The Venus Anadyomene,

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confounded, and forced to acknowledge the baseness of his origin: thereupon the inner man of the believer casts off his bondage as well as the angel or soul (which abides with the Demiurge), and ascends himself to his own place. For each person is made up of body, soul, and the inner man, the last of the more spiritual nature.

If the above-mentioned tablets could be decyphered, it may well be supposed that their contents would prove of a similar character to these passports to the Pleroma: it would be but a natural attention on the part of the survivors to furnish their departed friend with a correct copy of such long and obscure professions of faith, which otherwise would be extremely apt to escape his memory, the more particularly as they seem only to have been communicated to him by his spiritual guides when he was already at the last gasp.[1]

FORMULÆ FROM DIAGRAMMA OF THE OPHITES.

The motive for providing the defunct brother with a supply of these imperishable credentials is clearly indicated in the formula of prayers to be addressed to the Seven Planetary Powers by the released soul in its heavenward flight. Thus in the address to Ildabaoth we find, "O principal spirit of the Pure Intelligence, perfect work in the eyes of the Father and of the Son, in presenting to thee in this *seal*[2] the sign of life, I open the gate closed by thy power to the world, and freely traverse thy domain." Again, addressing Iao: "Thou that presidest over the mysteries of the Father and of the Son, who shinest in the night,[3] holding the second rank, the first master of death, &c., in presenting thee with this thy own *symbol*, I swiftly traverse thy domain," &c. To Sabaoth: "Receive me, beholding this pure *symbol* against

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or naked female, on our gems, is the adaptation of the ancient Greek type to this idea.

[1] The origin of this may be traced to the custom remarked by Tavernier, as existing among the Indians (whence many of such rites emanated), that the Brahmin placed upon the breast of the corpse seven pieces of paper, each containing a prayer to be used by his spirit in certain regions through which it had to pass after leaving the body.

[2] This explains the σφραγις so often inscribed on our gems.

[3] Taking Iao for the Lunar genius.

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which thy genius cannot prevail; it is made after the image of the type, it is the body delivered by the Peutad." To Orai, or Oreus: "Let me pass, for thou seest the *symbol* of thy power annihilated by the sign of the Tree of Life."[1] And be it remembered, that the primary signification of *symbolum* was the impression of a signet, in which sense it is most probable the word is used in the passages just adduced. It may be conjectured that in this conversion of the *symbolum* into a passport to heaven originated the use of the term in theology to signify a creed or summary of the articles of faith.

The soul, on its departure from the body, has to pass through the regions of the Seven Powers, which it cannot do unless fully impregnated with knowledge (Gnosis): otherwise it is seized and swallowed up by the dragon-formed[2] ruler of this world, and is voided through his tail back again upon earth, where it animates a swine or other brute, and repeats its career once more. But if filled with knowledge it escapes the Seven Powers, tramples upon the head of Sabaoth (of whom they say he has the hair of a woman), and ascends to the eighth heaven, the abode of Barbelo the Universal Mother. The "Gospel of St. Philip" contained another formula to be addressed to the Powers in order to obtain a free passage: "The Lord hath revealed unto me what words the soul must use when it ascendeth unto heaven, and how it must answer each of the Heavenly Virtues: thus 'I have known myself, and have *collected myself* from all parts; neither have I begotten sons to the Ruler of the world, but have plucked up his roots, and gathered together the scattered members: I know thee who thou art, for I am one from above.'" But if convicted of having left any offspring upon earth, it is detained below until it has collected all of them and attracted them within itself. This "collection of itself" was obtained by the observance of perpetual chastity, or rather (by the usual compensation) of all the unnatural vices that invariably spring from such an article of faith. If, however, a female of the congregation should by mistake allow herself to become pregnant, the elders caused abortion; and

[1] Is this the Cross, or the actual Tree sometimes figured on these stones?
[2] Satan Ophiomorphos.

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taking the fœtus pounded it in a mortar, together with honey, pepper, and other spices and perfumes. Then this "congregation of swine and dogs" assembled, and each dipping his finger into the mess tasted of it. This they termed the Perfect Passover, saying, "We have not been deceived by the Ruler of Concupiscence, but we have gathered up again the backsliding of our brother." The above is copied (omitting certain particulars as to the exact manner in which the vow of perpetual chastity was in one sense observed) from the very plain-spoken Epiphanius. He subjoins the singular explanation, then current, of the antique myth about Saturn devouring his own offspring, against which, and the practice thereon founded, Clemens Alexandrinus also had deemed it necessary to warn his flock so long before. In illustration of the punishment for leaving offspring behind, and so doing the work of the Demiurgus, they told a wild legend that Elias himself had been rejected from the gates of heaven, though to his own conscience a pure virgin, because a female demon had gathered up his seed and formed infants therewith, which, to his confusion, she there produced in testimony. Hence the origin of the Succubæ in later times, although they were supposed to do the work of their father the devil in a different way, connected with his supposed relations to the witches, whose lover he was ex-officio.

MEDIÆVAL TALISMANS.

Certain Gnostic figures and holy names[1] continued to enjoy a high reputation during the Middle Ages. At the very close of that period Camillo Leonardo, in his 'Speculum Lapidum,' or treatise on the virtues of stones, and of the sigils cut upon them, lays down this rule: "Magical and necromantic figures bear no resemblance to the Signs or Constellations, and therefore their virtues are only to be discovered by persons versed in those particular arts, viz. magic and necromancy: yet is it most certain that the virtue of the figure may be partly learnt from the quali-

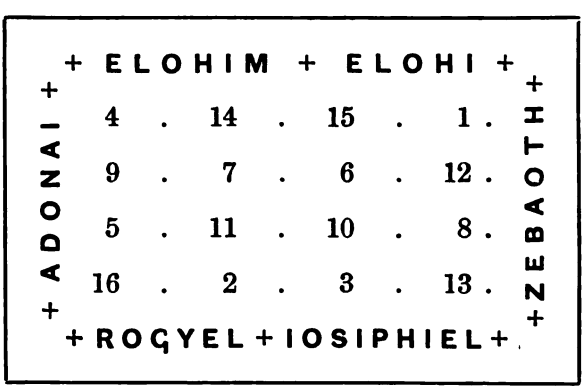
[1] Indeed the inexplicable ADROS VDROS, the most popular in the list, seems derived from the address to Chnuphis, αρτος πεινη υδωρ διψη πυρ ριγει; "Thou art bread to the hungry, water to the thirsty, fire to the cold."

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ties possessed by the stone it is cut upon. And inasmuch as the same stone often possesses different properties, so figures are found made up of parts of different animals expressing the various virtues of the gem itself. This is apparent in a jasper of my own, which represents a figure with the head of a cock, a human body clad in armour, a shield in one hand, a whip in the other, and serpents instead of legs: all expressive of the various virtues inherent in the jasper, which are, to drive away evil spirits, fevers and dropsies, check lust, prevent conception, render the wearer victorious and beloved, and stanch the flowing of blood. All such figures are of the greatest virtue and potency."

The sacred names Iao and Sabao were at last degraded into mere charms for making fish come into the net. The Mediæval doctors read *Iao* as *Aio*, and construing it as representing the sound of the peacock's cry, promised wonderful effects from a stone engraved with the bird, having a sea-turtle below, and the word inscribed in the field.

There is an amulet against the plague still current in Germany (perhaps the last surviving representative of this class of inscriptions), engraved thus on a thin silver plate:—



The numerals added together downwards, across, or from corner to corner, give the same sum (34): though why that number should have any special virtue is beyond my powers of explanation. This tablet appears suspended over the head of Melancholy in A. Durer's famous engraving—a proof of its importance

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in his days. What it did there had long puzzled me, until I met with this account of its virtue in J. Kerner's little tract 'On Amulets.'

The extreme barbarism that marks the execution of many Gnostic stones would lead one to suspect that the manufacture of them survived long beyond the date commonly assigned for the extinction of gem-engraving in Europe. The mechanical processes of this art are so easily acquired, and the instruments employed in it so simple and inexpensive, that the sole cause of its cessation in any age must have been the end of the demand for its productions. But the Arab astrologers under the Caliphate continue to speak of talisman-makers and their mode of proceeding; the Manichean branch of Gnosticism flourished down so far into the Middle Ages, and subsequently the old symbolism was taken up and improved upon by the alchemists and astrologers, that some of the extremely barbarous works, in which every trace of ancient art is extinct, may partly be referred to ages long posterior to the fall of the Western Empire. Examples of such gems are Pl. II. 6; XI. 3*a*. We actually find Marbodus in the eleventh century, when describing the virtues of the sard, turquois, and beryl, directing certain figures to be cut upon them in order to endow the stones with supernatural powers. This he would hardly have done had the art of gem-engraving been entirely extinct at the time he wrote; for at a later period, when such was really the case, we find the Mediæval philosophers always using the expression, "if a stone be *found* engraved with such and such a figure:" thus showing that they were entirely dependent upon chance for the acquisition of such precious articles, and that they had no artists within reach capable of executing on gems the potent designs prescribed by Rabanus Maurus, Chael, and Ragiel. It was not the antique origin of the gems that gave them their mystic virtues, although Camillo Leonardo ascribes the devising of their sigils to the children of Israel in the wilderness; and hence the popular Mediæval name of *Jews' Stones* for intagli in general: for we have abundance of inscriptions, talismanic and medicinal, cut on metal rings of Gothic date. Inasmuch as gems, from their inherent virtues, were esteemed an infinitely more potent vehicle for such spells than

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the neutral metal, the very fact of such devices never occurring on the former substances conclusively proves the existing incapacity of the times for bringing such into use.

The most complete example known of a Mediæval talisman is that given by Caylus (VI. Pl. 130). It is a gold ring, a plain four-sided hoop, weight 63 grains, found in cutting peat a league from Amiens, in 1763. Each side is occupied by a line in Lombardic letters, seemingly in barbarous Greek mixed up with various Gnostic titles:—

+OEGVTTAA+SAGRA+HOGOGRA+IOThE+HENAVEAT.
+OCCINOMOC+ON+IKC+HOGOTE+BANGVES+ALPHA+7IB.
+ANA+EGNETON+AIRIE+OIRA+AGLA . MEIDA+ADONAI.
+hIERNAThOT+CEBAI+GVTGVTTA+ICOThIN+.[1]

Most popular of the class in Gothic times for adorning rings, usually along the shank, were the names of the three Kings of Cologne; the three Magi: Caspar or Jaspar, Melchior, Baltasar. Others in frequent use were the now inexplicable words *Anazapta;* again, Guttu Guttu Thebal Ebal Adros Madros. The latter formula apparently represents in Latin the sound of the Hebrew words meaning, "Time, time, the world, vanity, I will seek after, the sought," which may be supposed to convey the precept, "Time is transitory, the world is vanity, I will seek after that which is worthy the search." Epiphanius (Hæres. xxv.), as we have already observed, laughs at the fondness of the Gnostics for employing as religious formulæ of mighty virtue certain Hebrew words, the sound of which had

[1] In these long talismanic legends the letters GVGV seem to occur as a matter of necessity. I add two very complete examples of the formula. The first covers the shank of a silver ring of the 14th century; the circular face bearing, in disjointed letters, the Ave Maria, +YRYRRAGVGVGVBERALT ERAMIALPLAIZERAE. The second, a silver ring-brooch (Waterton Coll.), has on the upper side +EZERA.EZERA. ERAVERAGAN.+ GVGVGVRALTERANI . ALPHA.ET.ω.; and on the flat surface underneath +AOTVO NO OIO MO O OIO AV.

The last line seems a common Gnostic formula badly copied, or metamorphosed by long tradition. A conjecture may be hazarded that the rest are Arabic *grigris*, verses from the Koran perhaps, written according to the corrupt pronunciation of the maker. The Moors of Spain were the great masters in alchemy and medicine in the age producing these ornaments.

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struck their ear as fraught with deep import, though in truth of utterly trivial meaning. For instance, "Attempting to impose upon the imaginations of the unlearned by the terror of the names, and the fictitious barbarian sound of the appellations, they give to one of the *Powers* the title 'Caulaucauch'—words from Isaiah xviii., signifying nothing more than 'Hope upon hope.'"

The importance attached to the names of the three Magi is probably connected with certain reminiscences of the ancient Mithraic worship: the more so if we accept Seel's plausible hypothesis, already noticed, that under this form early Christianity grew up in Gaul and Germany without molestation; or it may have had a somewhat more recent origin in Manicheism, itself but a heresy springing out of the Zoroastrian religion—Manes himself having been executed as a schismatic by the decree of an œcumenical council of the Magi, convoked in order to consider his doctrines. It may therefore well be imagined what an important part his professional brethren the Magi played in his Gospel now lost. When their names were first made public cannot be ascertained: one would have expected to find them mentioned in the 'Gospel of the Infancy,' which contains so full an account of their visit to Bethlehem, but no names are there given. They came thither in consequence of a prophecy of *Zoradasht*, and received from Mary, in return for their offerings, the Infant's swaddling-clothes, which on their return home, when the envoys were examined by the kings and princes, remained unconsumed in the midst of a great fire; a prodigy received as a convincing proof of the truth of their report.[1]

The notion that the three Kings typify each one of the three

[1] "On their return their kings and princes came to them inquiring what they had seen and done? . . . . But they produced the swaddling-cloth which St. Mary had given to them; on account whereof they kept a feast, and having according to the custom of their country made a fire they worshipped it. And casting the swaddling-cloth into it, the fire took it and kept it. And when the fire was put out they took forth the swaddling-cloth unhurt, as much as if the fire had not touched it. Then they began to kiss it and put it upon their heads and their eyes, saying, 'This is certainly an undoubted truth, and it is really surprising that the fire could not burn it and consume it.' Then they took it and with the greatest respect laid it up amongst their treasures."—Chap. III.

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ancient divisions of the earth—the first being painted as an European, the second as an Asiatic, the third as a Negro—seems borrowed from some ancient representation of the same regions, so personified, attending at the "Birth of Mithras," or the Natale Invicti, on December 25th. Hence the restriction of their number to three, although that of the "wise men" is nowhere specified by the Evangelists, or in the Apocryphal Gospels. The derivation of their names has been already attempted. The place yet shown as the scene of their adoration at Bethlehem is a *cave*—a most unlikely place under the circumstances (in fact Matthew distinctly calls it "the house"), but a necessary situation for the Mithraic ceremonial.

B·B·P·P·N·E·N·A· cut on a brass or iron ring, set with a green jasper engraved with a man's head, procured, according to Solomon, all kinds of blessings to the wearer, protection in travel, success at Court, &c.[1] I H S Nazarenus was a charm against epilepsy; so was the verse,—

"Vulnera quinque Dei sunt medicina mei."

Again, "I H S autem transiens per medium illorum ibat" was a safeguard against all dangers in travelling by sea or land. Edward III. took it for the motto upon his gold noble in memory of his miraculous escape in the great naval battle off Sluys—an event also commemorated by the type of the obverse, the King fully armed standing in his ship. Moreover, in the same age, the motto, being construed in an alchemical sense, was believed to refer to the fact that Raymond Lully, reputed possessor of the philosopher's stone, had *made* (through the King's compulsion, who kept him shut up in the Tower) the entire amount of gold required for this new coinage.

Equally popular, too, was the figure of St. Christopher cut on the metal ring, and that for the best of reasons, as long as folks put faith in the distich,—

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[1] The so frequent EBER DIABER are known to be the initials of two verses of a Psalm (Latin) potent against the plague: a fact elucidating similar formulæ. Mottoes so composed go back far; witness the famous banner that gave its name to the Maccabees.

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"Christophori faciem die quocunque tueris,
Illo nempe die mala morte non morieris."

Another notable spell against epilepsy was the letter T (or rather the Egyptian Tau) and the words ANANIZAPTA DEI EMMANVEL. In the Devonshire Collection is an antique cameo converted into an amulet by such an addition in Mediæval times.

GEMS OF THE ORTHODOX CHRISTIANS.

There is something very grand in St. John's vision of the angel ascending from the east, having the "signet of the living God,"[1] wherewith to seal upon their forehead all the elect. Münter, in his interesting treatise, 'Die Sinnbilder der Christen,' conjectures that this seal, as presented to the Apostle's mind, was the monogram of Christ, the X and P combined, afterwards in such favour with the early Christians for a similar use, either simple or converted into the form of a cross or an anchor. But the seer would certainly not have applied the title of the "living God," appropriated to Jehovah, to the Saviour, his "Lamb," or "Son of Man."[2] This title, which is but the translation of the Hebrew name, "He that is," makes it more than probable that the device, "His Father's Name," on the seal was the mighty Tetragrammaton, *i. e.* the four Hebrew letters composing the Holy Name, ever esteemed of such potency amongst the Eastern nations.[3] The Jewish author of the Apocalypse

[1] An ancient tradition makes this impress the *mystic Tau*; that symbol originally Egyptian, and adopted into the Bacchic mysteries, whatever be its true purport. In the painted glass of S. Denys, the Angel is shown stamping it on the forehead of the elect; the legend explaining the subject as SIGNVM.TAT. This mark is commonly borne by St. Antony, an Egyptian recluse be it remembered, and in the early Greek paintings is always *blue*.

[2] It is strange that Münter should have overlooked xiv. 1, which expressly declares what was the stamp impressed by this signet. The Lamb standing upon Mount Sion is there accompanied by the hundred and forty and four thousand sealed by the Angel who in vii. 3, "sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads," and now St. John describes the same as "having *His Father's Name written in their foreheads.*" It will be noticed here that the Seer alludes to the present Oriental mode of sealing, by inking the stamp, and so printing its device upon the document to be attested—the use of wax for such a purpose being unknown to them.

[3] Such was engraved on the famous seal of Solomon that made him omnipotent over all the genii.

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would have rejected as a blasphemy the use of the Greek characters to form so sacred a symbol.

At first it appears most strange that amid this vast multitude of monuments, more or less connected with Judaism and Christianity, works of a purely orthodox character should be so extremely rare that Chabouillet, in his list of the grand French Collection, is only able to indicate four belonging to the period of the Roman Empire, and those only the most ordinary types—the Good Shepherd, Dove, Fish, and Chrisma, or Sacred Monogram. But this difficulty is explained by several considerations, the strongest one being the horror of idols imbibed by the first converts from their teachers, themselves Jews by origin and education. Thus, even in the second century, we find Clemens Alexandrinus giving this advice to the Christians (Pæd. iii. 11): "Let the engraving upon the gem of your ring be either a dove, or a fish, or a ship running before the wind, or a musical lyre, the device used by Polycrates, or a ship's anchor, which Seleucus had cut upon his signet.[1] And if the device represent a man fishing, the wearer will be put in mind of the Apostle, and of the little children drawn up out of the water. For we must not engrave on it images of idols which we are forbidden even to look at; nor a sword or a bow, for we are followers of peace; nor a drinking goblet, for we are sober men. Yet many of the licentious world wear engravings of their naked minions and mistresses in their rings, so that not even if they would can they at any time enjoy a respite from the torments of desire. We must wear but a single one for the use of a signet; all other rings we must cast aside." In the above list, the phrase "little children drawn up out of the water" contains a plain allusion to the story and the name of *Moses*, "attractus de aquis;" but certain zealous ritualists have espied therein an early recognition of infant baptism—a practice unknown in the Christian

[1] His mother Laodice dreamed that she had conceived a son by Apollo, and that the god left with her his ring, in acknowledgment of his paternity. On awaking she found in her bed a ring engraved with an anchor; and the same figure was afterwards discovered stamped upon the thigh of the infant when born, and therefore was adopted as the hereditary device of his descendants for many generations afterwards (Justin. xv.).

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Church in our writer's age. Even a whole century later, Gregory Nazianzen, in his 'Sermon on Baptism,' urging the necessity of receiving it at the commencement of life, and the sin of postponing it until the last sickness (which had grown the general custom for the purpose of thus washing away all the sins of the past life at once), fixes *three* years of age as the fittest time, evidently because some sort of oral confession was still required from the candidate for admission into the Christian body.[1] Again, Augustine, though his mother Monica was a saint, and clearly, from what he relates of her, excessively scrupulous in all religious matters, yet he did not receive baptism until his thirty-third year, and then in company with his own natural son Adeodatus, himself fifteen years old.

Of the Saviour no ancient portraits exist on gems, except in the class of Byzantine cameos, although the Imperial Russian Collection[2] does boast of a head of Christ, a fine intaglio on *emerald*, to which the legend is attached that it was engraved by order of Pilate as a present to the Emperor Tiberius. If the portrait be actually what is pretended, it must be a production of the Cinquecento school, which has left us an abundance of Scriptural subjects admirably executed in the most precious materials. But I have always suspected that this is the identical *emerald* figured by Chiflet, No. 111, as the head of Christ crowned with thorns, though he takes it for a Gnostic work. It is in reality a head of Serapis, seen in front, and crowned with Persea boughs, easily mistaken for thorns, though the modius on the head leaves no doubt as to the real personage intended, even if the excellence of the work did not disprove a Gnostic origin. That the orthodox, during the ages capable of producing a fine gem-portrait of

[1] Gregory's words are (Orat. xl. 28), "But what wilt thou say concerning those still infants? Assuredly yes—in the case of danger threatening; for it is better to be sanctified without perception than to depart unsealed and uninitiated. Otherwise, I give my opinion that you should wait for the completion of *three years*, either a little beyond or a little under that time, when it may be competent for the child to *have heard some religious instruction*, and to make an answer, even though not fully comprehending it; but still in this way to mould and sanctify their souls and bodies by the great mystery." He censures the common practice to wait for 30 years of age before receiving baptism in imitation of our Lord's example.

[2] Or the cathedral of Moscow.

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the Lord, would have regarded as impious and idolatrous any such attempt, is evident from a passage in Epiphanius (Hæres. xxvii.),[1] who brings it as a grave charge against the Carpocratians that "they kept painted portraits, and even gold and silver images, and *in other materials*, which they pretended to be portraits of Jesus, and made by Pilate after the likeness of Christ, at what time he sojourned amongst men. These they keep in secret, along with others of Pythagoras, Plato, and Aristotle; and setting them all up together, they worship and offer sacrifice unto them after the Gentiles' fashion." Hence it follows that if ancient representations of the Saviour do exist, they must have proceeded from an extremely suspicious source. (See 'Heads of Christ.')

The earliest emblems of the Saviour which the Christians allowed were the Good Shepherd, the Lamb, and the Fish. The reason for selecting the two first is self-evident in the frequent use of such similitudes by the Evangelists; but the origin of the last is much more obscure, and it is difficult to conjecture why the figure of a fish should have been held in such honour by the Christians even of the primitive ages. The only satisfactory explanation seems to be the circumstance that in the quaint jargon of the Talmud the Messiah is often designated "Dag," or "The Fish." The sign of his coming, says Abarbanel, is the conjunction of Saturn and Jupiter in the sign Pisces. Three fishes interlaced into a triangle is a frequent Mediæval decoration; but after some pious Greek had discovered, doubtless by special revelation according to his contemporaries, that the word I.X.Θ.Υ.Σ. was the resultant of the initials in the title Ιησους Χριστος Θεου Υιος Σωτηρ, the type acquired infinite importance. The word itself, consisting as it does of *five* letters, that most virtuous number, became as efficacious as the actual figure, and holds a place amongst other charms on the Gnostic amulets. Its admission amongst the formulæ of that syncretistic religion had

[1] This quotation is valuable, showing as it does that even as late as the year 400, it was considered an atrocious sin to attempt to represent the bodily appearance of Christ. Perhaps these idols of the Carpocratians furnish the rude crucifixes discovered sometimes in the Catacombs; nothing else of that date is extant in the shape of a portrait.

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perhaps a source more antique than the discovery of its embodying the Christian confession of faith. The Rabbins, in their materialistic dulness, lacked the genius to invent even a name; they could only distort and vulgarise notions borrowed from their masters the Chaldeans. Now from time immemorial the Syrians held sacred the fish of the Euphrates, or perhaps fish generally, as was the case with the Egyptian priesthood; and believed that leprosy was the punishment of all who dared to eat thereof. Athenæus quotes a curious passage from a comic writer, describing the penance submitted to by every one who had transgressed the law, sitting in sackcloth upon a dunghill, being covered with boils.[1] The *frog*, a not uncommon device for a heathen's signet, often was adopted for such a use by the early converts; for it comes into the list of emblems of the resurrection of the body, on account of the complete change of nature it goes through in the second stage of its existence, from a fish to a quadruped. It was a very ancient emblem, and the type of many Greek coins. Frogs and snakes figured on the basis of the bronze palm-tree dedicated by the Corinthians to Phœbus or the Sun, where Plutarch interprets their presence as typifying the Spring (De E Delphico. 10).

The British Museum gems comprise some highly curious and authentic examples in this very restricted department. The most interesting among them is a Red Jasper intaglio, set in an antique gold ring, the shank formed of a corded wire in a pattern both novel and elegant. On the stone is engraved in neat characters **IHCOYC ΘEOY YIOC THPE**, "Jesus, thou Son of God, keep us." Another, of equal interest, and belonging to the earliest days of our religion, is the Fish cut in a fine emerald (quarter of an inch square), and set in an exquisitely moulded six-sided gold ring, with fluted and knotted shank imitating a

[1] The offerings to Atergatis were little fish made of gold and silver, thrown into the sacred lake. Manilius supplies the reason for such a dedication; his Venus, the Assyrian Urania or Mylitta, took the form of a fish, and hid herself in the Euphrates to escape the pursuit of Typhon. Hence, according to his masters, the Magi, came the sign Pisces. Mar. Empiricus prescribes for the colic the wearing a ring made from gold-thread melted down, and engraved with a fish or dolphin, the shank inscribed Θεος κελευει μη κυειν κολον τοκον.

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bent reed; the same pattern as the bronze ring figured by Caylus.[1] A beautiful and large Sapphire, extremely convex, bears the monogram of Christ somewhat modified, the shaft of the P being converted into a Cross by a line traversing it horizontally. The beauty and value of the gem attest the rank, perhaps imperial, of its original possessor. A Sard presents a singular device, the Cross planted upon the Fish, with two doves perched on the extremities of the arms, and the name IHCOYC repeated above and below them. An unique subject, if genuine, is the Good Shepherd in the midst of a landscape, done on a Sard much after the manner of the Gnostic work, so very easily imitated by a modern hand.

So uncommon are gems presenting Scriptural subjects, that can with any probability be assigned to the date of the Western Empire, that two such now placed amongst the camei (Mediæval Class) demand particular notice. These are "Christ's Entry into Jerusalem" attended by three figures, bearing palms: and the "Madonna and Child" seated, an angel standing at each side, two others hovering overhead. Both are intagli in Green Jasper, and cut in the manner of the rudest Abraxas gems.[2] The same case contains two Byzantine Christian camei of unusually neat work, and on that account possibly dating as far back as Constantine's reign. The first is John the Baptist; the name in monogram inscribed on each side of the figure, a full length, cut on a splendid Sardonyx, the body in bluish-white, the robe light-brown, on a dark sard field; the other, the Annunciation, is indubitably stamped by its design as one of the very earliest monuments of Christian art. The Virgin stands slightly inclining towards the angelic messenger, here represented in the form and stature of a Cupid, a relic of antique taste; not in the "shape of a perfect man," afterwards adopted in representations of the scene; and for the assumption of which Al Beidawi assigns so material a motive (Comment. on Koran, XIX. or "Mary"). In this cameo the figures in half-relief are fairly executed in pearly-white upon a black ground, size small,

[1] Recueil d'Antiquités, iv. pl. 76, No. 5.

[2] It is possible, however, these may belong to the very rare mediæval attempts at gem-engraving that preceded the Revival.

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only ¾ × ⅝ inch. Over the figures is a neatly cut legend ΟΧΑΙΡΕΤΙϹΜΟϹ, "The Salutation," and ΓΑΒΡΙΗΛ, and the monogram $\overline{\text{MP}}$ $\overline{\Theta\text{Y}}$, "Mother of God." Both these camei formerly belonged to the Herz Collection.

A Bust of the Saviour in half-relief upon a large bloodstone, in the field $\overline{\text{IC}}$ $\overline{\text{XC}}$ for ΙΗϹΟΥϹ·ΧΡΙϹΤΟϹ, being much coarser in execution than the above, may be as late as John Zimisces, for it is exactly in the style of his well-known copper coinage. This bloodstone is oval, 1⅜ × 1¼ inch by measurement. The greatest rarity, however, in the list is a "Christ Ascending," bearing in his hand a long cross, at his side a small figure of a man kneeling; a work purely Gothic in design, and exactly agreeing with that so frequent decoration of mediæval sepulchres, but executed in the rudest manner conceivable. The figures are cut out as if they were done in ivory or boxwood, in high, partially, in three-quarter relief. The stone, an agate-onyx of opaque white on a transparent stratum, is about three inches high by two wide. The style is very similar to the cameo 3496, "Noah drinking under a vine," in the French Cabinet, which Chabouillet considers a genuine example of mediæval art in this line. Our specimen may indeed be the first essay of some Gothic wood-carver in the Byzantine art of cameo-engraving in the fourteenth century. Nothing in the design or *mécanique* of its cutting (the stone is, as it were, sliced off in long chips) resembles those of the contemporary Byzantine works. This piece came out of a miscellaneous collection formed in Suffolk, but where discovered is unknown. This last example, strictly speaking, is foreign to the purpose o this article, which is to treat of the primitive monuments alone of Christian art; but its existence is so important in the history of gem-engraving, that I could not resist the temptation to insert a detailed account by making this digression.

The most tasteful of these Christian devices that has come under my notice is to be seen in Gorlæi Dactyliotheca, 211, where the Sacred Monogram rests upon the head of a Cupid, on each side of whom stands a dove; in the field Α and Ω. This design is the more valuable from its being cut on the face of a solid crystal ring having a cable twisted shank. From the late

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epoch of all such stone-rings, it is manifest that the fashion had been learnt from the Sassanian Persians, amongst whom such was the occasional form given to their calcedony signets, though less elegantly carved. Very singular also is the type figured by Beger (Thes. Palat.), a tall Latin Cross with the Fish hanging from the end of each arm.

An unique representation, now in my own collection, is an engraving on Red Jasper, a Martyrdom. A female saint kneels before a naked headsman armed with a singularly shaped sword, broad-bladed with a thick back, evidently made for decapitating. Before her stands a dove holding in its beak the olive-branch, aloft is the Chrisma; the ground line is formed into a palm, and in the exergue are the letters A N F T, the established abbreviation of the New Year's Day compliment, Annum Novum Felicem Tibi, showing that the gem was designed for a New Year's gift to some devotee. This intaglio is engraved with extreme neatness, and cannot be placed later than Constantine's age, whose better-executed coins in fact its style greatly resembles. I have likewise seen an antique gold ring set with a large nicolo, engraved with the Heavenly Father seated on his throne surrounded by the Twelve Patriarchs, a curious and early design. Interesting in an equal degree was the sard once in Herz's collection, the Good Shepherd standing between two tigers looking up at him, with the legend **ESIVKEV**, which evidently cloaked the, at the time no doubt, dangerous confession—**KE** (for Κυριε) **IESV**, "Lord Jesu help."

To the above scanty list of genuine Christian relics may be added another ring of the pattern above described, its face an oblong tablet engraved with the Chrisma alone. This ring, unlike most of the kind, was intended for the finger, not for suspension on a cord merely, the opening being wide enough for the former purpose, and the entire surface bearing marks of long wear. Said to have been found in Provence, whence most of these specimens come; and with it another ring similarly cut out of crystal, but bearing on its face a large Bee or rather a Cigala in high relief in the same stone.

As for the numerous forgeries in this class, sold by the Roman *antiquari*, and supposed to be found abundantly in the Catacombs,

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any knowledge of antique art suffices at once to detect the very recent date of their fabrication. The sole example in this line that has ever come to my knowledge, that could for a moment inspire any belief in its authenticity, was a flat agate rudely fashioned into a Greek cross, and engraved on one side with a veiled female bust crowned with a nimbus; on the other, that of Christ within a cross-shaped glory. But a closer examination shows the last portrait to be a modern addition, whilst the female bust, apparently antique, has been turned into a Madonna's by scratching in the distinctive nimbus.

The foregoing examples all proceed from the Christianity of the Western Empire, but there yet remain for consideration a most interesting series, which testify to the penetration of the religion and its symbols into the remotest regions of the East. Amongst the Sassanian stone seals the work, and the Pehlevi legends on some, as well as the nature of the designs, demonstrate that they were the signets of the Persian Christians; those Nestorians "to whom the jealous pride of Peroses afforded an asylum when persecuted and expelled from Europe and Asia Minor by his orthodox rival the Byzantine Emperor." In after times their sectarian hatred rendered them the most zealous supporters of Nushirwan and Khosru Parviz in their repeated invasions of the Roman territories.

Chabouillet particularises in the Paris Collection, as examples of this kind:—No. 1330. The Sacrifice of Abraham—sardonyx striped. 1331. The Virgin seated holding the Infant; with a Pehlevi legend—garnet. 1332. The Virgin and St. Elizabeth clasping hands, between them a star and crescent;[1] a Pehlevi legend in the connected letter (or early Cufic)—carnelian. 1333. The Fish placed in the middle of the Christian monogram —a carnelian annular stamp. And lastly, the most valuable of all, for it presents the combination of the ancient Oriental form and of Greek decoration in the same monument: the bust of Christ without a beard, in profile, the Fish underneath, and inscribed **XPICTOV**—cut on a truncated cone of white calcedony. Chabouillet thinks these works all anterior to the

[1] The usual representation of the sun and moon.

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persecution instituted by Sapor II. in 340, but the characters used for the legend in 1332 attest a considerably later age.

Also E. Thomas, in his "Notes on Sassanian Mint-marks and Gems," engraves amongst the latter a seal; device, an elegant Cross *Patee*, with a Pehlevi legend in the latest character.

HEADS OF CHRIST.

The non-existence of antique portraits of Christ upon gems, at first sight unaccountable, is readily explained by a reference to certain considerations upon which we have already sufficiently dwelt. A brief allusion to them will therefore suffice. As long as the first missionaries of Christianity were either of Jewish origin, or trained in the Jewish way of thinking, the well-known abhorrence for the representation of any living thing renders the production or the preservation in their community of anything in the shape of a portrait, and above all of one attempting to express a Divine Being, a matter of moral impossibility. We have seen how limited the choice of subjects is, allowed by Clemens to the Christians of the second century as typical of their faith; and in the next Tertullian's expressions (De Pudicitia) clearly prove that the figure of the "Good Shepherd"[1] was the only authorized medium for the representation of their Lord and Master. True indeed it is that Alexander Severus, a few years later, placed in his private chapel an image of Christ amongst the other philosophers, as Lampridius records; but this was in all probability an ideal likeness (a small figure in gold), as those of Abraham and of Orpheus must necessarily have been, who were included in the same list of the benefactors of mankind. That good Catholic Theseus Ambrosius is indeed very wroth at the supposition (quoting this statement of Lampridius) "that the Pagans should have preserved the likeness of Christ, but the disciples have neglected to do so, a notion the mind shudders to entertain, much less to believe." But his own prejudices

[1] "Ubi est ovis perdita? Procedant ipsæ picturæ calicum vestrorum." Meaning by this the figures in gold leaf, the usual decoration of drinking-glasses under the Lower Empire, the bottoms of which are found so plentifully in the Catacombs, usually fixed into the plaster closing up the tombs.

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prevented his perceiving how that the one was a necessary consequence of the other, the Jews abhorring images on account of the adoration paid to them by the Gentiles. The images of the Carpocratians were also (we may conclude from the late origin of the sect) of no greater authenticity than those admitted by the tolerant emperor. It was common then for persons to carry about with them the image of their patron deity; thus Apuleius (to refute the charge of magic) in his "Apology" produces the Mercury,[1] "an admirable work of art;" and Asclepiades the philosopher, Ammian tells us, took with him wherever he went a small silver image of the Celestial Venus, which having incautiously left with tapers burning before it in the great temple at Antioch, when he visited Julian there, occasioned the fire that destroyed that magnificent edifice. Thus it is evident that during the two centuries when the art of engraving portraits was so extensively cultivated throughout the Roman world, the execution of the sacred likeness was by their own mode of thought rendered altogether impossible for the primitive Christians.

After the reign of Constantine, when the religion had lost much of its original severity, the impress of Jerusalem, and was greatly modified by the influence of Roman ideas, bas-reliefs and mosaics relating to the events and personages of the New Testament present themselves in great profusion. Probably the earliest of these is the sarcophagus in the Museo Gregoriano, panelled with bas-reliefs representing the miracles of Christ, of very careful and neat execution. A proof of its early date may be found in the figure of Christ, who, in the Raising up of Lazarus, appears beardless and equipped with a wand in the received guise of a necromancer, whilst the corpse of Lazarus is swathed in bandages exactly as an Egyptian mummy. But by this time gem engraving may be said to have been in its last decline, hardly supplying a single authentic portrait of even the emperors themselves; and all images destined for honour or veneration were executed in gold repoussé work, or by the die.

[1] He was accused of always having about him the figure of a skeleton—a potent engine in the operations of the Black Art.

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The Byzantine period, even before the revived Judaic feeling of the Iconoclasts, is entirely barren, the centuries between Justinian and the Comneni being enveloped in the densest barbarism. It is interesting to note how, upon the revival of learning during the latter dynasty, cameo-cutting again flourished under their patronage, as it did four centuries later, in a similar connexion, at Florence and Milan.

From these premises we may appreciate the value of the cameo (294 Paris) Christ teaching the three disciples, one at his side and two facing him; two angels stand behind the Saviour, who is represented as bearded, while the disciples are beardless. The work of this cameo, says Chabouillet, announces the first ages of Christianity; an opinion also supported by the manner of its treatment. We can imagine such a work to have been a commission from the Empress Helena, destined for the decoration of some reliquary or sacerdotal vase.

There is a good engraving now in the print shops of a head of Christ, said to be copied from the Russian emerald, and passing for an authentic portrait of our Lord executed by order of Pilate, and sent by him to Tiberius.[1] It is unnecessary to point out to any one acquainted with Roman ideas, much less to the connoisseur in gems, the glaring absurdity of this legend, which, even if true, must rest upon a mediæval tradition, the gem itself not affording, by any possibility, any indications as to its original destination. It may also be observed, *en passant*, that in the age of Tiberius the emerald was never engraved upon, and that a Roman governor would not have selected so valuable a material for illustrating the *acta* of a trial for rebellion (the charge upon which he was forced by the priesthood to pass the sentence of death). If this intaglio does really exist, and upon an emerald, it is without doubt the work of one amongst the great artists of the Renaissance, to whom their patrons supplied precious stones adequate, in their intrinsic value, to the dignity of the subject ordered to be engraved thereupon.

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[1] This story was unknown to Peignot, who has carefully collected all particulars as to these ancient likenesses or *vernicles*. See also Heaphy's excellent series of articles on this subject in the Art Journal for 1861.

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THE LEADEN BOOK OF THE MUSEUM KIRCHERIANUM.

(Jesuits' College, Rome.)

This, the most complete series yet discovered of our sepulchral passports, came into the hands of the over-learned Father Kircher, but under what circumstances is totally unknown. Matter suspects[1] it to be the same as that given by Montfaucon to the Cardinal Bouillon, who died at Rome in 1715. Matter, in his 'Excursion Gnostique en Italie, 1862,' has given a facsimile of the seven leaves composing the volume. They are of lead, 4 × 3 inches square, engraved on both sides with a symbolical design, under which are in every case five lines, the sacred number no doubt intentionally observed by the scribe. These lines are written in a large uncial Greek character, often square shaped, and very similar to that used on the talismans already treated of. Intermixed are other characters, some resembling the hieroglyphics still current for the Signs and the Planets; or perhaps letters of the Demotic and the Pehlevi alphabet. The language does not appear to be Coptic, but rather some Semitic tongue, many words being made up entirely of consonants, showing that the vowels had to be supplied by the reader. The chief interest of the relic, however, lies in the designs heading each page, where we recognise all the usual figures of Gnostic iconology, accompanied by others entirely novel, touched in by a free and bold graver in the fewest possible strokes. The purport of the writing underneath coincides, beyond all doubt, with the prayers prescribed in the Ophite Diagramma to be offered by the ascending soul to the several planetary genii. The very number of the pages, seven, in itself confirms such an explanation. These stages in the heavenward journey are represented in the following manner:—

I. A nude female figure, in which the navel ("the circle of

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[1] But without reason: see note at end of this article.

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the Sun") is strongly defined: she makes a sign of adoration to a genius wearing a conical cap and a short tunic, armed with a trident: Siva's proper weapon, and therefore appropriated in mediæval art to the new ruler of Tartarus.

Reverse.—A palm-branch within a circle, and a large caduceus.

II. Female in long flowing robes addressing a gigantic fowl, much too squat in its proportions for Thoth's Ibis; and probably intended for that most sacred Egyptian bird the Phœnix.

Rev.—Nude female adoring an indeterminate monster, displaying something like a serpent's head and neck, but furnished with huge ears, and issuing out of a low altar. The first line of the prayer underneath seems to begin with the three Pehlevi letters, equivalent to S, P, V.

III. Horus leaning upon some kind of instrument, contemplating a huge tortoise, more carefully drawn than the rest, which is crawling towards him.

Rev.—Female in long, full robes, holding up her hands in adoration to the small figure of a naked child (Horus), who seems in the act of leaping down from a lofty pedestal.

IV. Anubis dressed in a short mantle, regarding a lofty mountain, the apex whereof is formed into an eagle's head.

Rev.—Female in ragged attire, leaning on a staff, advancing towards another richly clad, and crowned, who holds forth her hands as though terrified at the apparition.

V. *Abraxas* himself, in his proper form, looking towards a female fully draped, who offers him something indistinct, but resembling the letter E, upside-down. The prayer underneath commences with IAΩ; hence it may be conjectured that the first word in all the other pages is the name of the deity depicted above.

Rev.—Frog and serpent facing each other: the ancient emblems of Spring; but probably in this situation typifying regeneration and eternal life.

VI. A headless man, with rays issuing from his body, and holding forth a torch, appears falling backwards with affright at the approach of a winged dragon.

Rev.—A squat personage, with a radiated crown, stands in front-face, in the attitude of the Egyptian Typhon. On the

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other side stands a very indefinite figure, resembling a Cupid with square-cut wings, his back towards the spectator.

VII. Female with her robe flying in an arch over her head, as Venus sometimes appears, extending her hand to a Bull coming towards her: the latter vastly superior in drawing to any of the other figures. One is tempted to discover in this design Venus and her *tutela*, Taurus.

Rev.—Nude female reclining on the ground, towards whom advances a large bird, seemingly intended for a pigeon.

It is impossible to avoid imagining in the sacred animals figured in the respective stages, an allusion to the forms assigned by the Gnostics to the planetary genii. And as one of their legends taught that the Saviour in his descent to the lower world escaped the vigilance of these Powers by assuming an *analogous form* in each of their respective spheres, a conjecture may be hazarded that a similar metamorphosis of the illuminated soul in each sphere may be represented in these inexplicable pictures.

Another discovery of a similar nature, and the highest interest, has lately been made, and prosecuted with the greatest care. In 1852, whilst excavating the ruins of a tomb in the Vigna Massini, near the Porta Pia, a marble sarcophagus came to light, bearing a bas-relief representing either the Adoration of the Magi, or its ancient prototype, the "Birth of Mithras." The floor of the tomb was paved with a mosaic equally ambiguous in its subject, whether the Madonna and Child, or, what is on many grounds more probable, Isis suckling Horus. Several minor sarcophagi in terra-cotta surrounded the larger one; and in these were found many leaden scrolls rolled up, not made into a book.[1] Eleven of these can still be decyphered: Matter figures three of the most perfect; but none of them bear any

[1] Leaden scrolls were likewise employed in witchcraft, designed to compass the destruction of an enemy. Tacitus (An. ii. 69) states that the fatal illness of Germanicus was attributed to such arts of his enemy Piso. "Sævam vim morbi augebat suspicio veneni a Pisone accepti; et reperiebantur solo ac parietibus erutæ humanorum corporum reliquiæ carmina et devotiones et nomen Germanici *plumbeis tabulis* insculptum, semiusti cineres, ac tabe obliti, aliaque maleficia quis credunt animas numinibus infernis sacrari."

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inscriptions. On one Anubis appears wearing a long tunic and buskins, holding out a buckler and a scroll; at his feet are two female busts; underneath are two serpents entwined around the same object, as in the second scroll, where these two busts likewise appear, viz., a corpse swathed up like a mummy. In this next the busts are placed on each side of a large figure of Anubis, much mutilated, attired as before, but holding out a cross. Below lies the mummy, swathed by the numerous folds of a huge serpent, the Agathodæmon, guardian of the deceased. This last figure will serve to explain similar designs occurring on gems; compare Plate III. 1, with its legend *Initia.* In the third scroll, the most interesting of all, Anubis, attired as before, bears on his arm a large oblong object, perhaps the regular Roman *Scutum;* an arrangement converting his outline into a Latin cross.[1] On this and in the field are a number of Gnostic symbols, such as will be found on the stone, Plate VIII. 1, and also the charm against the colic, prescribed by Alexander of Tralles, the figure  . Amongst them occur some well-known Masons' Marks: for instance, an eight-armed cross, a square cut by a vertical line: and at his foot the rhomboid, or Egyptian "Egg of the World," towards which a serpent, coiled into one circle, is crawling. A curious addition is the inscription, partly in the field, partly across the tunic, in which some cursive letters make their appearance, thus disposed—

κεβᴺγ εκβλ
φκγκ κει
βκε ⍋
κφ ⊙
*

Of the symbols just noticed, a large collection are given in the Plates. As to their origin, a plausible conjecture may be founded on the circumstance that certain among them agree

[1] Here we have, and done by no scoffer, the "God adored by Alxamenos."

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closely enough in shape with characters in the Babylonian cuneiform alphabet. The characters standing for **S**, **A**, the exact value of which is decided by their appearance on the coins issued by the Persian satraps of Salamis in Cyprus, can be here recognised beyond all doubt. Inasmuch as the cuneiform was the national alphabet of Persia down to the Macedonian Conquest, or B.C. 330, a knowledge of it would naturally be preserved amongst the Magi for some generations later, and continue to be used for religious documents. And even after their real meaning was forgotten, certain combinations expressing sacred ideas would continue to retain a mystic, and perhaps a thaumaturgic importance. In these symbols, therefore, we probably behold the very "Numeri Babylonii"[1] which Horace dissuades the fair Leuconoe from consulting in her unadvised wish to learn the Future. Such relics of ancient Babylonian lore would, we may well suppose, never cease to be figured as they were originally devised; the recent Pehlevi would have carried with it too recent a stamp to impose upon superstition. But the possible origin of the entire class, both ancient and mediæval, will be discussed at length in the Section treating of Caste, and Masons', Marks.

CARD. BOUILLON'S LEADEN BOOK.

How Matter could have supposed this to be the same as the one now in the Museum Kircherianum, and published by himself, it is difficult to imagine. Montfaucon's Plate CLXXVII. gives every leaf of the former, and evidently copied with great fidelity, which I will briefly describe for the sake of comparison with the foregoing designs: for the analogy of the figures in Card. Bouillon's proves the similar purpose of the two monuments; whilst the variation in particulars attests the existence of two distinct examples of the class. The leaves enclosed in the two lead covers, all connected by rings, secured by a rod passed through them, are only six in number, and the inscriptions, in much the same character as in Matter's copy, are of but four lines on a page, and on only four pages, the other eight pages

[1] All numerals were at first letters of an alphabet.

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having figures alone. Now for these figures, which appear better drawn than in the first case. Page 1. Man naked, standing up. 2. Female dressed, walking. 3. The same, extending one hand. 4. Anubis in a short mantle. 5. The god Abraxas. 6. Bird-headed man, surrounded with rays. 7. Bust of Serapis. 8. Female reclining. 9. Terminal figure, in the form of a cross. 10. Frog. 11. Phœnix or vulture. 12. Female holding over her head a star-spangled veil. Montfaucon supposes these to be the genii presiding over the hours of the day; the first expressive of rising, the last of night; and calls attention to the fact that the seventh page is occupied by Serapis, who is sometimes entitled εαραγραμματος θεος. In Pl. CLXXVIII. he figures from Bonami another, "discovered in a tomb," engraved in his Mus. Kircherianum, which had seven leaves, and two figures heading the specimen pages: this I suspect is the one Matter saw; though now in pieces, not bound up.

THE GNOSTIC PHŒNIX.

The strange bird occasionally figured on our talismans is most clearly depicted on page II. in Kircher's Leaden Book. This creature seems neither the ibis nor the vulture of the old Egyptian mythology, but rather resembles the Phœnix as represented standing on a globe, with the legend "Felix Temporum Reparatio" on the coins of Constantine's sons. The type is allusive to the promised regeneration of the empire under the new religion and new dynasty—a promise, however, verified in the contrary sense altogether—a proof this what a hold the fable had taken on the public mind, that it should thus be acknowledged upon the imperial coinage. There is a certain sacred bird often introduced on the Assyrian cylinders, and named in that language *Rech*. If this be not the prototype of the phœnix, it undoubtedly is of the Arabian *Rokh*, the theme of so many wonderful tales. Herodotus (II. 73) had seen when in Egypt the picture of "a sacred bird called a phœnix, very like an eagle in outline and in size, but with plumage partly gold-coloured, partly crimson," that visited Heliopolis once in

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five hundred years—an object, therefore, most suitable to adorn and impart virtue to a talisman.[1]

The *Taous* (literally *Peacock*) or copper bird, the idol in the present day worshipped by the Assyrian *Yezedis*, is in all likelihood the descendant of the type now under consideration. This sect, taking its name from the ancient Persian Izeds (genii), are thus by profession veritable Gnostics, though by the Mohammedans esteemed worshippers of the Devil alone, on account of their respect for the Evil Principle, who replaces the Ildabaoth, the Lord of this world, who holds so important a position in the theology of Valentinus.

THE VASE OF SINS.

A most curious example of the employment of Gnostic ideas in the medical art is to be seen in the stone figured by Matter, Plate II. C. fig. 4. The obverse represents Chnuphis placed between a hawk-headed deity and a female adoring him. Above are the Five Vowels; in the field a large pouch-like object placed upon a low altar: the whole surrounded by a Coptic legend, in which only the name *Stratina* is to be decyphered. But the reverse explains in barbarous Greek the object of the composition: τασσον την μητραν της δεινα εις τον ιδιον τοπον Ο τον κυκλον του ηλειου: "Place the womb of such and such a one into its proper place O, the circle of the sun."

This inscription proves the stone to have been a *general* amulet, a prophylactic against the "prolapsus uteri," a frequent complaint in ancient times, owing to the abuse of the hot bath, so relaxing in its effects upon the internal muscles, as well as to the universal recourse to *abortiva* whenever considered necessary. Indeed the word Μητρικον, "Uterine," occurs on talismans, and with the same meaning.

The "circle of the sun" is the navel, which marks the natural

[1] Pliny adds to this description that its head was embellished with a crest; and thus the Romans represented it. Could the whole legend have been founded on the first specimen of the peacock that found its way into Egypt —a fowl imported by the Phœnicians from India as early as Solomon's reign?

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position of the organ in question: the navel being considered in the microcosm as corresponding to the sun in the universe—an idea more fully exemplified in the famous hallucination of the Greek anchorites touching the mystical Light of Tabor, which was revealed to the devotee after a fast of many days, all the time staring fixedly upon the region of the navel, whence at length this Light streamed as from a focus.

The stone under consideration, engraved at first for a *general* amulet, was converted, upon its purchase, into a particular one by adding *Stratina*, the patient's name. This appears to me the only explanation, wherever it occurs, of the vessel, so strangely supposed by Matter to be the "Vase of Sins;" that is, the jar in which, under the antique system, the embalmers deposited the entrails of the corpse; and which was afterwards held up before the gods, with a deprecatory prayer, as containing the cause of all the sins committed by the defunct in life, and, therefore, the sole portion of him deserving of future punishment. Another circumstance in support of this explanation is, that Isis, the peculiar goddess of maternity, is often figured in her Roman statuettes as holding aloft a conical object, flattened in front, and exhibiting a triangular orifice. Some take this for an udder, others for the Persea plum. It is, however, nothing of the sort; but simply the female uterus, the most obvious and natural symbol of that divinity's peculiar office. In her mystic coffer were carried the distinctive marks of both sexes; the *lingam* and the *yoni* of the modern Hindoos. Their Isis, Parvati—who in this character is styled *Devi* (Diva, the *goddess* par excellence)—still bears in her hand a similar object, the *yoni*, or *bhaga*, as her distinctive symbol; often a precious stone thus fashioned. Similarly, her consort, Siva, wields the phallus, or lingam. Thus, the Nizam's Diamond—the largest known for certain to exist, weighing 340 carats—exhibits the evident attempt of the unskilful native lapidary to reduce it into such a form, and to mark the longitudinal orifice. Strange omen to happen under a female reign, this diamond was accidentally broken in two just before the great Sepoy rebellion.

Devi's mark—that borne on their foreheads by Parvati's sectaries—is made by three strokes; the two outer white or yellow,

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the centre one always red. It is interpreted to represent the womb, *Medhra*, of Bhavani (a title of Parvati), out of which proceeded all that exists. Isis carries the same attributes—the kid and the asps, or *cobras*—as Bhavani, upon the talisman figured by Caylus (Rec. d'Antiq. iv. Pl. xvi.).[1] But having only one pair of hands, the Egyptian goddess grasps in each the several attributes borne singly by her many-handed Indian prototype.

DEATH, HOW REPRESENTED IN ANCIENT ART.

Intermingled with the Cupids on ancient monuments, and easy to be mistaken for one of the sportive group, appears the personification of, according to our way of thinking, a most discordant idea, that of Death. He can only be distinguished from the god of Love by his somewhat more matured form, sometimes wingless, and the inverted torch, which he is either extinguishing, or upon which, already extinguished, he plants his foot; or else, holding it downwards, leans thereon with his folded arms, having his legs crossed in the attitude of profound repose.[2]

To understand how so charming a type came to be adopted for so gloomy an idea, we must remember that, to the ancient mind, arguing merely from the analogy of nature, Death was presented merely as the necessary converse of Birth, and, therefore, no terrors were conveyed in the thought; "Nullique ea tristis imago," in the words of the Roman poet. It implied nothing more than a return to the state of unconsciousness, such as was before Being commenced; or, as Pliny clearly expresses it, "To

[1] Compare also Pl. XV., where the attributes grasped in each hand are still more numerous.

[2] On a Roman gem of my own, a wingless boy of grave aspect, extinguishing with a gesture of determination an inverted torch, rests his left hand on the rim of a huge circular vase lying on its side behind him, whence he may be supposed to have emerged. This design, long an enigma to me, was at last cleared up by an analogous subject in the fresco decorating the tomb of Vincentius and Vibia in the catacombs of Prætextatus, where in the scene inscribed "Abreptio Vibies et Discensio," the messenger of Fate, "Mercurius," appears stepping into and leading the way into a vase precisely similar in shape and position. The allusion to *Orcus* by this introduction of the *Orca*, or jar, is evident enough; and indeed both words may have the same root, ερκος, an enclosure.

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all the state of being, after the last day, is the same as it was before the first day of existence; neither is there any more sensation in either body or soul after death than there was before birth."

Hence this mere return, as Byron has it,

> "To be the *nothing* that one was
> Ere born to life and living woe,"

inspired no fears beyond those springing from the natural instinct of self-preservation. Many carried this indifference to the opposite extreme, exemplified in the old story about the Thracians lamenting on the occasion of a birth and rejoicing on that of a death. Pliny declares that the greatest blessing Nature bestows upon man is the short span of his life; and the later Platonists, as the passage from Macrobius above quoted testifies, termed the being born into the world spiritual death; dying, spiritual birth. But after the ancient order of ideas had been totally revolutionized, and when the death of the body came to be looked upon as the punishment of original sin, and as the infraction, not the fulfilment, of a natural law, the notion necessarily assumed a more horrific aspect, which was exaggerated to the utmost of their power by the new teachers, as supplying them with the most potent engine for the subjugation of the human mind. The ancient type, therefore, which implied nothing but peace and unbroken repose, was at once discarded as totally inconsistent with the altered view of the reality. Add to this, everything like a Cupid had already been forcibly enrolled amongst the angels, and had thus received a character still more foreign to that of the newly created King of Terrors. Hence the Christians had to seek in the ancient iconology for a more fitting representative of the offspring and avenger of transgression—something that should be ghastly and awe-inspiring—and such a representative they found made to their hand in the old way of picturing the *Larva*, or bad man's ghost. This had always been depicted as a skeleton; and such a figure was recommended by old associations when the Christians, as Böttiger phrases it, "creeping out of their catacombs, substituted for the genius with his inverted torch the skulls and moulder-

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ing bones of their own martyrs." That the Larva was popularly imagined in a skeleton form appears, among the rest, from Ovid, in his Ibis, "Insequar et vultus ossea larva tuos."

> "Where'er thou turnest my injured shade shall rise
> And flit, a fleshless ghost, before thine eyes."

Seneca also talks of the "larvæ frames of bare bones hanging together;" and Trimalchio at his feast, in order to promote conviviality, flings upon the dinner-table a larva, or skeleton of silver, so artfully jointed as to bound about with all its limbs vibrating. Such a larva sometimes appears on gems, introduced there for the same purpose—to remind the wearer of the shortness of life and the wisdom of making the best use of it, as Virgil's Copa Syrisca urges—

> "Pone merum et talos pereat qui crastina curat
> Mors aurem vellens: Vivite, ait, venio."

Thus we see him on a gem (Impronto Gemmarie, ii. 10, 11) holding out with one bony hand the *lecythus*, or long pointed vase of oil that accompanied every interment, and leaning with the other arm upon a tall amphora, as if recommending the enjoyment of its contents when still in one's power. The second, a more fanciful composition, where Cupid, holding aloft his torch, is peeping into a vast Corinthian crater, out of which a larva is throwing himself headlong, as if affrighted at the glare; a design where the abstruse meaning baffles even conjecture. A skeleton was likewise often painted on the walls of tombs. Thus, in one at Pompeii, a female is depicted laying a fillet across a child's skeleton. In such cases this form is merely adopted to represent the state of death by placing before the eye the dead body reduced to a condition the most expressive of mortality and decay, and which cannot be mistaken for that of sleep. But it is easy to perceive how ready the transition was from the emblem of mortality, regarded as a condition—especially when, in the popular mind, it also typified a restless and malignant spiritual influence—to the adoption of the same inauspicious shape for the embodiment of the destroying power itself.[1]

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[1] *Kali*, in her character of Destroyer, wears a necklace of human skulls.

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But now to return to the ancient imagery of the subject. The idea of death is conventionally—and this is the most common way — represented on sarcophagi and sepulchral tablets by a horse's head looking in through a window upon a party feasting—life's festive scene—an allusion sufficiently obvious. Yet more forcibly is the same notion carried out in an Etruscan sculpture (Rev. Archéol. 1844), where the demon *Charun*, armed as usual with his huge mallet, is leading the horse on which sits the defunct, his face muffled up. This, perhaps, is the cause why the horse's head was so favourite a device for signets. It served the wearer as a memento-mori, like the death's head so much in fashion in the jewellery of the Cinque-cento period, but with a far other object in the antique examples. One may conjecture that such was the source of that immemorial custom in South Wales of the mummers carrying around a horse's skull in their Christmas merry-making.

Cognate to this is that most antique representation of the conveyance of the departed soul to the abodes of bliss, imagined as some happy island in the far west, upon a curious hippocampus resembling a winged sea-serpent, and which afterwards became the Roman Capricorn, the ruler of the western clime.

> "Thou for thy rule, O Capricorn, hast won
> All that extends beneath the setting sun :"

as Manilius lays down. The original type occurs sometimes on Phœnician scarabs; and no doubt can exist as to its intention, for on an Etruscan vase figured by Caylus (Rec. i. Pl. 32) this creature appears on one side, the serpentine ferryer of souls careering over the western wave; on the other stands the *præfica*, lamenting over the corpse of the departed laid out upon its sepulchral couch of bronze.

On the Coffer of Cypselus Night was represented carrying in her arms two children, twins, alike in all respects save colour; the one white, the other black, having their *legs crossed*. Their names were inscribed over them—Sleep and Death. Thus it is manifest that, from the very dawn of pictorial art, the crossed legs were the distinguishing mark of the most profound repose; and the sluggard's wish "for a little more folding of the hands

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23.



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in slumber," tells the same for the crossed arms of the Roman genius leaning on his extinguished torch. This traditional attitude retained its significance far down into the Middle Ages, as so many cross-legged effigies of warriors reposing from their fatigues, which popularly pass on that account for crusaders, yet remain to attest.

Another most expressive emblem, and one frequently occurring, is the Winged Foot crushing a butterfly. But the foot—probably for the same reason as the horse, its conveying the notion of departure—seems especially to have been chosen for the emblem of death. Thus Horace's simile—

> "Pallida mors æquo pulsat pede pauperum tabernas
> Regumque turres."

Hence the foot became the peculiar attribute of the infernal gods; and such, cut in stone, were often dedicated to Serapis; apparently *ex votos* commemorating an escape from the very threshold of his dark domain. A magnificent example was lately exhumed from the ruins of the Serapeum at Alexandria; a colossal foot, richly sandalled, on top of which sat enthroned the god, with his attendants, Cerberus and the serpent *Shesha*, at his side.

Moor notices the existence of the impressions of a pair of feet cut upon a flat stone about many Hindoo temples, and the tradition that they commemorated suttees, marking the place whence the widow stepped from earth upon the funeral pile, or into the gate of heaven. This custom bears upon the Buddhist veneration for the print of Adam's foot upon the summit of the peak called after him in Ceylon. Again, we find a similar form of relic-worship manifesting itself in the very metropolis of Christianity; for the prints of Christ's feet on a slab of basalt, a paving-stone of the Via Appia, have been worshipped from time immemorial in the church of Domine quo vadis, built over the consecrated spot.

It has long been a question how the Grecian Hades (the Invisible One) and the Roman Pluto were represented—meaning these deities in their original acceptation—for their Egyptian equivalent, Serapis, regarded as god of the shades, is much more frequently to be seen upon monuments of Roman date than

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either of his brethren, Jupiter and Neptune. Here, also, he is frequently sculptured in the character of *Pluto*, the Lord of Riches, seated on a throne, holding a cornucopia, and extending in his right hand a bundle of all earth's choicest gifts. Under what form the early Greeks had represented their Aidoneus, the God of the Shades, before Serapis was introduced into their mythology, is a question which has never been satisfactorily answered. Cerberus, indeed, occurs sometimes on early scarabs as a human figure with three heads of a dog, and also under the form more generally recognised. Homer (v. 845) names the "helmet of Hades," which Pallas puts on to render herself invisible to Ares, and this the scholiast explains by "cloud and invisibility;" whence one may conclude that, inasmuch as this deity was rendered invisible by his very attributes, no attempt was made to personify him by art. A deity in long flowing robes, and bearing a trident wanting one of the prongs, sometimes painted on the Nolan vases, has been explained as Aidoneus, but on insufficient grounds, being doubtless a Neptune in the archaic style. Again, Homer (xi. 445) gives him the epithet "famed for his steeds;" alluding doubtless to the rapidity of the destroyer: and in this title may perchance lie the motive for the adoption by the Greeks of the horse for an emblem of death. If we could meet with any genuine antique sculpture of the Rape of Proserpine in early art, it would at once decide the question; but the ill-omened character of the subject, set forth in Suetonius's anecdote about the ring so engraved presented by Sporus to Nero as a new year's gift, had almost completely excluded this scene from the artist's catalogue. Stosch, in his immense variety of mythological designs, has nothing of the kind, and Raspe only a single antique paste, and that of dubious interpretation, in which a god with quiver on his shoulder is bearing away a nymph in a car drawn by two swans. Such attributes bespeak the late date of the composition—the period when Hades, Serapis, Phœbus, were interpreted as merely signifying certain periods in the sun's annual course.

As for the Roman Pluto, or rather, to give him his Latin name, Dis,[1] there was the best of all reasons why he was left out of the

[1] *Dis, Ditis*, from the same root as *Death*.

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province of art which admitted nought that was hideous, or of evil augury. There can be little doubt that to the popular imagination of the Romans he still continued the *Charun* whom we yet behold presiding in the sepulchres of their Etruscan instructors in the arts, a giant with hideous face, grinning tusky jaws, and pointed ears; winged buskins on his legs, one arm extended entwined with a serpent, and shouldering a huge mallet. It was doubtless a continuation of this idea that caused the retention of precisely the same instrument, *mazza*, at Rome for the execution of the more atrocious criminals until the recent introduction of the guillotine.

That Pluto was so personified in the shows of the amphitheatre as late as the third century may be gathered from a passage in Tertullian (Apol. xv.), where he describes, amongst "the scenic cruelties of the afternoon," the spectators laughing at Mercury raising the dead with a red-hot iron—applied doubtless to the prostrate bodies to ascertain if any life yet lingered in them—and the "*Brother of Jupiter*, armed with a mallet, escorting the dead bodies of the gladiators," to give them the *coup de grâce*. The Etruscan image passed down into the belief of the mediæval Florentines, for Dante introduces—

> "Charon dimonio con occhi di bragia."
> "Charon, a devil with live coals for eyes."

In early Greek art the disembodied spirit is aptly typified under the form of a bird with a human head. On a vase in the British Museum, painted with the "Death of Procris," such a bird is seen winging its way aloft, as if escaping from the transfixed nymph. The back of the famous scarab in the Russian collection (subject, the "Death of Achilles") is carved into such a creature, rending her breast in agony. Sometimes the same idea is personified by a simple bird, often seen in Etruscan designs where the subject is a hero's death. Again, we find it varied into a female with butterfly wings—the well-known Psyche—and such a form appears seated upon the capital of the pillar marking Achilles's tomb, before which the sacrifice of Polyxena is about to take place.

This human-headed bird stands also for other mythological

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creations. In this form the Syrens are always painted; or, sometimes, with half a woman's body, the rest a bird's, figured thus on painted vases in the scene with Ulysses, and again in the bas-relief of their contest with the Muses. As, despite their beauty and melody, the Syrens were considered malignant and destructive beings, exactly the same shape was given to the Harpies. Indeed, they both appear to have been originally identical in meaning. As the name of the latter signifies the "Snatchers-away," the Harpy symbolizes death in the abstract, and often is depicted as armed with a sword, or bearing upon its shoulders the funereal lecythus, or the torch. Hence the Harpy occupies a conspicuous place in the decoration of many early sarcophagi. There are not sufficient data for us to make out how Euripides had personified death in the Alcestis.[1] It is plain that he had brought on the stage Hades himself, for he styles him "King of the Dead," and Macrobius uses the name Orcus in reference to the same subject. All that can be deduced from the incidental allusions of the *dramatis personæ* is, that this deity was robed in black and armed with a sword, with which he severed a lock from the head of his prey, so devoting her to the subterranean gods.

Such a personification had, to all appearance, nothing horrible or grotesque about it; far different from the *Ker*, also black-robed, according to Homer's normal epithet for her, as engraved by the archaic chaser on the Coffer of Cypselus. Such a shape was readily accepted by the gloomy genius of the Etruscans, ever delighting in the mysterious and the horrible. She thus on a gem threatens us in a shape almost identical with that Pausanias describes, having a huge Gorgon's head, open-mouthed, four wings, like an Assyrian genius, arms wreathed with serpents, and her action that of furious haste. So, doubtless, were the Furies brought on the stage by Æschylus when the horror of their strange aspect so affrighted the Athenian audience. He must for his purpose have revived the old and forgotten type, for the Furies that pursue Orestes on the painted vases of this date are no more than shadowy old women brandishing serpents and torches.

[1] Perhaps under this very form, for the Harpy sometimes occurs with the bust of an aged man replacing the woman's.

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THE HINDOO INEFFABLE NAME.

This awful Name emblazoned in three Sanscrit letters within a cartouche formed by a serpent, that normal inclosure for the "Blessed Name" amongst the Gnostics, is appropriately supported upon the elephant-head of Ganesa, the god of Wisdom. The word being triliteral is rather **AUM** than **OM**, as usually rendered into English. It is never to be uttered aloud, but only mentally by the devout. In its elements, **A** signifies the Creator, **U** the Preserver, **M** the Destroyer; or the triad Brahma-Vishnu-Siva. If uttered, the sound much resembles *Amen*, as drawled out by a country parish clerk:[1] in fact it is used for *Anghe-Kar*, or "So be it," in token of approbation. Other names of the Deity are *Tat*, and *Sat* = Virtue.[2]

The origin of the Ineffable Name is thus related (Inst. Menu, ii. 70):—"Brahma milked out as it were from the three Vedas the letter **A**, the letter **U**, and the letter **M**: together with the three mysterious words *Bhur*, *Bhavah*, *Swar;* or Earth, Sky, Heaven. From the three Vedas also the Lord of Creatures, incomprehensibly exalted, successively milked out the three treasures of that ineffable text beginning with the word *Tail*, and entitled *Savitri*, or the Gayatri. A priest who shall know the Veda, and pronounce to himself, both morning and evening, that syllable and that holy text preceded by the three words,[3] shall attain the sanctity which the Veda confers; and a *twice-born* man who shall a thousand times repeat those three, apart from the multitude, shall be released in a month even from a great offence, as a snake from its slough. The three great immutable words, preceded by the triliteral syllable and followed by the Gayatri,

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[1] Moor, Hindu Pantheon.

[2] These names are to be recognised in the Egyptian Tat, Taauth, and Sate "Truth." I cannot help suspecting that this very Hindoo Trigrammaton AUM is sometimes concealed in the assemblage of vowels inscribed on some of our talismans. Certainly the calcedony (Mert. Schaaf. 517) engraved on one side with the Delphic Apollo in a good style, on the other, by a later hand, with a man dancing, his apron filled with fruits, presents in the legend around the latter ΠΤΡC ΟΠΑΙΟωΑΟΥΜΟΛΕΙ, this sacred triliteral, as it would be spelt by a Greek.

[3] "Bhur, Bhavah, Swar."

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which consists of three measures, must be considered as the *mouth* or principal part of the Veda."[1]

The Gayatri, or holiest verse of the Vedas:[2] "Let us adore the supremacy of that Divine Sun, the Godhead who illuminates all, who recreates all, from whom all proceed, to whom all must return; whom we invoke to direct our understandings aright in our progress toward the Holy Seat." Another is: "Earth! Sky! Heaven! Let us meditate on the most excellent light and power of that generous, sportive, and resplendent Sun, that it may guide our intellects."

The Brahmin's confession of faith also contains this Gayatri: "This new and excellent praise of thee, O splendid, playful Sun (*Pushan*), is offered by us to thee. Be gratified by this my speech; approach this craving mind as a fond man seeks a woman. May that Sun who contemplates and looks into all worlds be our Protector. Let us meditate on the adorable light of the Divine Ruler (*Savitri*); may it guide our intellects. Desirous of food, we solicit the gift of the splendid Sun, who should be studiously worshipped. Venerable men, guided by the understanding, salute thee, Divine Sun, with oblations and praise."

Moor observes on this, that "it is difficult to conjecture why this text should be so sedulously kept secret, for its exposition unconnected with the idea of mystery and affectation of profundity doth not appear likely to have the effect, so dreaded by all priests, of 'guiding the intellects of the multitude to the discovery of truth.'"

These invocations will afford some clue to the meaning of the "Eternal Sun," so frequent upon our gems, where also the name "Tat" may occasionally be recognised; and their inscriptions, could they be interpreted, would probably often contain a cognate

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[1] In this doctrine lies the whole origin of our talismanic inscriptions; and it may well be that many of them actually do contain the Three Words concealed by a corrupt pronunciation, or purposely veiled under an anagram from the eyes of the profane.

[2] There is something in this that irresistibly reminds one of the invocation in the unknown tongue upon the Herz garnet. The "Divine Sun" must be the CEMECEIAAM so frequently recurring.

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import, a conjecture supported by the rare exceptions couched in Greek. Compare Creuzer's Plasma, p. 101.

HINDOO PRINCIPLE OF DUALISM.

In Valentinus' 'System of Emanations,' all proceed from the First Cause in pairs, male and female—a feature which pre-eminently stamps his scheme as borrowed from the Indian theosophy; for in the latter every Principle is divided into a male and female Energy, each exactly alike to the other, "the same distinguished by their sex alone." Each deity exerts his power through the agency of his female Principle or *Sacti*, whose *Vehan* or vehicle again—that is, instrument or attribute—is also fixed and represented in a material form. Of the Persons in the Supreme Triad, the Sactis and Vehans are,—

1. Of Brahma, Saraswati, goddess of harmony and the arts (the Jewish Sophia): her *vehan* is a swan or goose. (Hence Juno's attribute.)

2. Of Vishnu, Lateshmi, goddess of prosperity, has the title of Kamala, or lotus-bearing: her *vehan* is Garuda the man-eagle.[1] Vishnu, in one avatar, takes the title Varaha, and his Sacti, Varahi, and then her *vehan* is the buffalo: hence the favourite Persian name Varahrani, and the frequency of the buffalo, or rather Brahminee bull, on their signets.

3. Of Siva, the Changer or Destroyer: Bhavani, goddess of fecundity:[2] her *vehan*, the tiger or bull.

Certain of their numerous appellations bear a strong resemblance to words frequently occurring in our gem legends. *Sumitri*, the wife of Vishnu, in his seventh avatar, may explain **COVMAPTA** as *Nauthji*, a name of Vishnu and Crishna, the equally common **NAVTITA.** *Isa* and fem. *Isi* is indubitably the source

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[1] This explains why the Sassanian queens carry that flower in their hands; they are represented in the character of Kamala. I shall have occasion hereafter to note the appearance of a Hindoo god's title in the names of certain Sassanian kings. As their empire extended so far into India, no doubt Hindoo princesses formed a portion of their harems.

[2] And consequently of destruction, for the one implies the other; nothing perishes—things only take a new form, called by the vulgar death.

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of the name Isis; and *Nila*, dark blue, an epithet of Parvati, appropriately designates Father Nilus.[1] Vishnu as *Naryani*, floating upon the surface of the deep in his *Vat* leaf, is coloured all over a deep blue.

The lotus being the attribute of the goddess of Abundance (Ceres or Abundantia), we obtain the reason of the intermixture of its seed-vessels usually mistaken for poppy heads amongst the wheat ears in the Cornucopia.

YAMA'S TITLES AND ATTRIBUTES.

The analogy between Yama and Serapis becomes more evident on the consideration of other points connected with his office. Thus, to the souls of the good, he appears as Dherma-Raja, and his servant (psychopompus) is Karmala, who conducts them into his presence in a self-moving car. To the bad souls he is Yama, and his servant is Kashmala, who drags them with halters round their necks over rough and thorny places.

Other titles given him are Kritanta and Mritu. The connexion of the latter with Mors is sufficiently evident, and is a fitting appellation for Dis; for in Dis, Ditis, the root of the English "Death" unmistakeably lies; a connexion already noticed.

THE HINDOO TRIAD: ITS THREE PERSONS.

Brahma.	Vishnu.	Siva.
The Creator.	The Preserver.	The Destroyer.

The last is rather the Changer, for all death is no more than *change*. Siva indeed is in one of his characters considered the same as Yama, the god of the shades.[2]

From the Inscription of Buddha Gaya, Bengal, dated 1005 of the era of Vikramaditya, or 57 B.C. "Amara-deva having heard

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[1] COTMAPOA seems to be an epithet of the sun, for Montfaucon gives in Pl. clvii. a figure of Sol with this legend; and on the reverse XEPOTBI, doubtless allusive to the cherubim.

[2] Inasmuch as Brahma and Vishnu are the elements Fire and Water, it is easy to discover whence came the old Hellenic Triad, Zeus, Poseidon, Hades.

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this (voice) caused an image of the Supreme Spirit Buddha to be made; and he worshipped it according to the law with perfumes, incense, and the like; and he thus glorified the name of that Supreme Being, an Incarnation of a portion of Vishnu. 'Reverence be unto thee in the form of Buddha; reverence be unto thee, Lord of the earth! reverence be unto thee, an Incarnation of the Deity and the Eternal One! reverence be unto thee, O God, in the form of the God of Mercy, the dispeller of pain and trouble; the Lord of all things; the deity who overcomes the sins of the Kali-yug (Iron Age); the guardian of the universe; the emblem of mercy towards all those that serve thee—**OM,** the possessor of all things in vital form. Thou art Brahma, Vishnu, and Mahesa (Siva); thou art the Lord of the universe; thou art the proper form of all things,[1] moveable and immoveable, the possessor of the whole. And thus I adore thee. Reverence be unto thee, the bestower of salvation; reverence be unto thee, the destroyer of the evil spirit *Kesi*. O, Damadara! show me favour. Thou art he who resteth upon the face of the milky ocean, and who lieth upon the serpent Sesha. Thou art Trivikrama, who at three strides encompasseth the earth. I adore thee, who art celebrated by a thousand names, and under various forms, in the shape of Buddha, the God of Mercy: be propitious, O thou Most High!' (Moor's Hind. Pantheon, p. 223.) Having thus worshipped the guardian of mankind, he became like one of the just. He joyfully caused a holy temple to be built of a wonderful construction, and therein were set up the *Divine Foot* of Vishnu,[2] for ever purifier of the sins of mankind, the images of the Pandus, and of the descents of Vishnu, and in like manner of Brahma and the rest of the divinities." *Feet* in relief, or incavo, cut in stone, are common about Hindoo temples; they are memorials of Suttees, the widow having mounted from that stone

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[1] That is, the pre-existing type; the Ferouer, the Platonic Idea, the Talmudical Adam-Kadmon, all springing from one source.

[2] Compare the colossal foot dedicated to Serapis at Alexandria as his proper attribute. The Winged Foot, entwined with a serpent placed between two lions *seiant*, is cut on the top of the altar, made "Deo Serapi M. Vibius Onesimus ex visu." Its sides present, one, the god on his throne; the other, Isis standing.—Montfaucon, Pl. cxxii.

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upon the pyre. In this usage seems the source of the connexion between such a figure and Serapis, or Yama, god of the shades.

An ancient silver plate found in a pit at Islamabad, north of the Bay of Bengal, records the hallowing of the site of a projected temple there by the deposit in the pit of one hundred and twenty small bronze images, called *Tahmudahs;* twenty of larger size, *Languda;* one large in stone, *Langudagari;* and a brass vessel containing two of the bones of *Thacur.*[1] It gives an account of the birth and infancy of Buddha:—"When Buddha Avatar descended from the regions of souls, and entered the body of Mahamaya, the wife of Soontah Danna, Raja of Kailas, her womb suddenly assumed the appearance of clear transparent crystal, in which Buddha appeared beautiful as a flower, kneeling and reclining on his hands." When born he had on his head two feet, and on his hands the marks of wheels. Brahma attending at the birth, received the infant in a golden vessel, and delivered him to Indra.

The penances of the demon Tarika, the Tapuri-sura, each of 100 years' duration, by which he forced Brahma to grant him any boon he might demand, are thus enumerated:—

1. He stood on one foot, holding the other and both his hands towards heaven, with his eyes fixed on the sun. 2. He stood on one great toe. 3. He took for sustenance nothing but water. 4. He lived similarly on air. 5. He remained in the water. 6. He was buried in the earth,[2] but continued, as under the last penance, in incessant adoration. 7. The same in fire. 8. He stood on his

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[1] Thacur, "noble," a common epithet of a god or deified mortal. In mediæval ecclesiastical usage (and probably to the present time) it was absolutely necessary before the consecration of any altar in a church that a relic of some saint should first be buried underneath its base. This coincidence can hardly be accidental.

[2] To be buried in a small vault until a crop of barley sown in the earth over it at the time of inhumation shall be ripe and cut, is yet esteemed the most efficacious of all good works, for obtaining from heaven the object most desired. Great people get it done for them by proxy; and the resident at Runjeet Singh's court has described all the preparations of the *patient*, and the actual performance of the task, which occupied six weeks. He was present at the closing and the opening of the vault.

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head with his feet upwards. 9. He stood on one hand. 10. He hung by his hands on a tree. 11. He hung on a tree with his head downwards.

TAUROBOLIA: THE BAPTISM OF BLOOD.

In the later times of the Roman empire this extraordinary ceremony held the highest place as a mode of purification from all sins, however atrocious. Prudentius has minutely described the rite, in which the person to be regenerated descended, stripped of his clothing, into a pit, the mouth of which being covered with boards pierced full of holes, a bull was slaughtered upon them, and his hot blood streaming down through these apertures after the manner of a shower-bath, completely drenched the recipient below. The victim selected proves this rite to have been connected with the Mithraica, which, according to Justin, had a baptism for the remission of sins; and the bull being the recognised type of life in that system, his blood necessarily constituted the most efficacious laver of regeneration.

INCANTATIONS.

Erictho, in her evocation of the ghosts, appeals thus to the infernal deities (Lucan, VI., 695-750):—

"Et Chaos innumeros avidum confundere mundos,
Et Rector terræ quem longa in secula torquet
Mors dilata deum . . . . . .
Tisiphone, vocisque meæ securа Megæra
Non agitis sævis Erebi per inane flagellis
Infelicem animam? Jam vos ego nomine vero
Eliciam Stygiasque canes in luce superna
Destituam: per busta sequar per funera custos;
Expellam tumulis abigam vos omnibus urnis.
Teque deis ad quos alio procedere vultu
Ficta soles Hecate pallenti tradita forma
Ostendam faciemque Erebi mutare vetabo—
Eloquar immenso terræ sub pondere quæ te
Contineant Ennæa dapes, quo fœdere mœstum
Regem noctis amas; quæ te conjugia passam
Noluerit revocare parens. Tibi pessime mundi
Arbiter! immittam ruptis Titana cavernis.

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Et subito feriere die. Paretis? an *Ille*
Compellandus erit quo nunquam terra vocato
Non concussa tremit qui Gorgona cernit apertam
Verberibusque suis trepidam castigat Erinnyn
Indespecta tenet vobis qui Tartara, cujus
Vos estis Superi: Stygias qui pejerat undas?"

"And Chaos ever craving to enfold
Unnumbered worlds in thy confusion old,
And earth's dull god, who groaning still beneath
Life's lingering torture, pinest for tardy death.

. . . . . .

Tisiphone, and thou her sister fell
Megæra, thus regardless of my spell,
Why haste ye not with sounding scourge to chase
The soul accursed through hell's void, formless, space?
Say, must I call you by the names your right
And drag the hell-hounds forth to the upper light?
'Midst deaths I'll dog your steps at every turn,
Chase from each tomb, and drive from every urn.
And thou, still wont with visage not thine own
To join the gods round the celestial throne,
Though yet thy paleness doth the truth betray
And hints the horrors of thy gloomy sway,
Thee, Hecate, in thy true shape I'll show,
Nor let thee change the face thou wearest below.
I'll tell what feasts thy lingering steps detain
In earth's deep centre and thy will enchain,
Tell what the pleasures that thee so delight,
And what tie binds thee to the king of night,
And by what union wert thou so defiled
Thy very mother would not claim her child.—
I'll burst thy caves, the world's most evil Lord!
And pour the sun upon thy realms abhorred;
Striking thee lifeless by the sudden day,
If still reluctant my behests to obey.
Or must I call Him, at whose whispered name
Earth trembles awestruck through her inmost frame—
He who beholds unveiled the Gorgon dire,
And tames the Furies with their whips of fire:
He to whom the abyss, unknown to all, is given,
He the true master of the gods of heaven?"

All these personifications are in a spirit quite foreign to the Grecian mythology, but savouring strongly of the Indian. Lucan's Chaos is the Hindoo destroyer, the negro giant Maha-Pralaya swallowing up the very gods themselves in his wide-

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opened mouth. His "Rector" Terræ, pining for the promised death so long in coming, has not a prototype in the old mythology, and remains to me utterly inexplicable. His Furies haunting tombs, instead of the former awful Eumenides the avengers of guilt, are mere demons, churchyard ghouls. But his Hecate is plainly Bhavani; her "facies Erebi" the Gorgon aspect that the latter wears in Yama-putri, but which she puts off when on earth or in heaven; and the infernal feasts that so charm her are the human sacrifices offered by her special devotees the Thugs. In this, her "infernal aspect," a true "facies Erebi," she is depicted adorned with a necklace of human skulls and grasping in each hand a naked victim. Her lord, the "pessime mundi arbiter," suits well with the Destroyer Siva.[1]

Kali, one character of Bhavani, appears in sculpture as a terminal figure, the exact counterpart in outline of the Ephesian Diana. Even the stags, those singular adjuncts to the shoulders of the latter, are seen in a similar position springing from Kali's hands. The numerous breasts of the Ephesian statue were also peculiar to Isis,[2] who is allowed to be the Indian goddess, in her form Parvati. Now Diana, as Hecate or Proserpina, belongs to the Infernal world, and reigns in the same capacity as Bhavani there. The Ephesian image, made of cypress-wood, "fell down from heaven," *i. e.* came from some extremely remote and antique source. Her priests were called Essenes or Hessenes (from Hassan, "pure") in virtue of the strict chastity they were sworn to observe during the twelvemonth they held that office. Such asceticism is entirely an Indian institution, and was developed fully in the sect flourishing under the same name around the Dead Sea, and springing from the same root as the mysterious religion at Ephesus.

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[1] Lucan may indeed have heard something of the Demiurgus Ildabaoth, "the Son of Darkness or Erebus," existing in some old theogony under a different name. The Gnostics did not invent, they only borrowed and adapted.

[2] But only in her statue in the Serapeum, not in those belonging to the original creed of Egypt. Macrobius' account shows that her exact character *there* was a matter of dispute, like that of her lord, Serapis.

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THE MAGI AND BRAHMINS AS KNOWN TO THE ROMANS.

Ammian, in his history of Julian's Persian expedition, gives the following curious details upon this subject (xxiii. 6). "In these tracts are situated the fertile lands of the *Magi* (in Media) concerning whose profession and pursuits, since we have here come upon them, it will be fitting to give some brief information. Plato, that greatest authority upon famous doctrines, states that the Magian religion or Magia, known by the mystic name of *Machagistia*, is the most uncorrupted form of worship in things divine, to the philosophy of which, in primitive ages, Zoroastres, a Bactrian, made many additions, drawn from the mysteries of the Chaldeans; as did, still later, Hystaspes, a most learned prince, the father of Darius.[1] This prince, Hystaspes, when he was boldly penetrating into the unknown regions of *Upper India*, had come upon a certain wooded solitude, the tranquil silence of which is occupied by those exalted sages the Brachmans. Instructed by their teaching in the science of the motions of the world and of the heavenly bodies, and in *pure religious rites*, as far as he was able to collect them; of these thus acquired notions he transfused a certain proportion into the creed of the Magi. The latter, coupling these doctrines with their *own peculiar* science of foretelling the Future, have handed down the whole through their descendants to succeeding ages. Thenceforth through many generations, down to the present time, a multitude sprung from one and the same stock dedicates itself to religious offices. It is said that they preserve unextinct the Sacred Fire, that in the first place fell down from heaven, a portion of which, for a good omen, used always to be carried before the kings of Asia.[2] The number of persons thus descended was at first but small, and they were exclusively employed by

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[1] This is a mistake, for the father of Darius was only satrap (ὑπαρχος) of Persia under Cambyses. The name, derived from *Gushtasp*, the planet Venus, was doubtless a very common one wherever the Magian religion was professed.—Herod. iii. 70.

[2] Meaning the Persian kings when monarchs of all Asia.

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the Persian princes for the performance of religious services. It was esteemed a great crime to approach the altar or to touch the sacrifice, before the Magus, after reciting the appointed prayers, had poured upon it the preliminary libations.[1] But by gradual increase they have grown to the dimensions and name of a distinct nation, and inhabit villages unprotected by walls, are allowed to follow their own laws, and are respected on account of their religious character. It was from this race of Magi that *Seven*, as ancient history records, usurped the Persian crown upon the death of Cambyses, and were crushed by the conspiracy of that Darius who gained the crown through the neighing of his horse." In this account Ammian has strangely confounded the Hystaspes, an ancient Median king, with the much more recent Persian noble of the same name, the father of the first Darius.[2] But the whole legend proves clearly the previous existence of the Magi as a body of diviners and seers, like the Jewish communities called "Sons of the prophets," and the subsequent modification of their religion by an importation of Brahminical ideas after the conquest of some Indian provinces. Such being the case, we need not be surprised at finding Sassanian kings bearing names derived from Indian deities, as in the case of Varanes (from Varani, Vishnu's title), as several others of the race assume that of the peculiar Persian god Ormuzd, in the form of the favourite royal name Hormisdas.

PRESERVATION OF GNOSTIC SYMBOLS BY THE FREEMASONS.

At the first sight it is altogether startling to recognise so many Gnostic, and primitively Indian, symbols, retaining apparently their original sense, amongst the insignia and illustrated formulæ of our Freemasons; and in itself it gives a colour to their claims to the most venerable antiquity. But the pleasing illusion vanishes when we investigate the mode of their

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[1] Herodotus says exactly the same thing.

[2] And yet more absurdly converts the one Magian usurper Smerdis into the number seven; that of the Persian nobles who put him down.

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descent; and the Order, though claiming them as its legitimate inheritance, turns out at the last a mere daw in borrowed plumes.

In the first place it can be easily shown that our Freemasons have no connexion, either actual or traditional, with the mediæval guilds bearing that name; a pretence they so zealously maintain. The latter were corporations of actual workmen, where each after serving a regular apprenticeship, and according to the custom still kept up in some countries, producing a trial-piece to prove his competency, was admitted "Free" of the guild and "accepted" amongst its members. The potations accompanying the ceremony are in truth the sole point of affinity between the ancient and the modern Freemasons.

The mediæval guild of Masons was no more a *secret society* than was the guild of Carpenters, or of Tailors, or of Cordwainers. Every mason indeed, and this is the only thing peculiar to the craft carrying with it an air of mysterious antiquity, had on his admission a *mark* or cypher assigned him, which he was bound to set upon every stone he dressed[1] (still the rule) in order to distinguish his own work from that of his fellows, when the dressed stones came to be looked over by the architect, or rather master-mason, who paid him for the approved, but stopped his wages for those spoiled. In fact, in mediæval documents connected with building, the name Freemason signifies merely the worker in hewn stone: the common workman who ran up the body of the wall, usually in rubble or ragstone, was called the "Rough-waller."

As to these Marks, of which many examples from the most diverse regions are subjoined, their history is indeed full of interest and of obscurity. Many of them are traditional, and go back to the highest antiquity, being found on early Greek and Phœnician buildings, wherever hewn stone was employed, and in vast abundance and variety in all mediæval architecture.

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[1] Similarly every "merchant of the Staple" joined to his own initials on his seal, or in his trade mark, the mark of the staple-town to which he belonged. This, though similar in outline, was variously modified to indicate each of the fifteen places in England, Wales, and Ireland appointed by Edward III.

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These Marks, doubtless in the beginning religious, many being identical with the Hindoo caste-marks by which the followers of the different gods are distinguished, and hence to be discovered even on Celtic monuments, as in the singular instance at Stonehenge,[1] have degenerated, for centuries further back than can be traced, into the mere signatures of illiterate workmen.

To illustrate this curious point I shall here quote a few of the most important Caste-marks, reserving the notice of the mediæval Marks for a separate article in the Description of the Plates.

An equilateral Triangle, the apex upwards, is the symbol of Mahadeva, *i. e.* Siva, or Fire personified.

The same, the apex downwards, of Vishnu or Water.

The two figures intersecting each other is the *Sherkun* or Six-pointed, the two elements in conjunction.

This five-pointed figure, Pl. XIII. A. 4, symbol of Siva and Brahma (the latter god having *five* heads), becomes the famous Solomon's seal[2] of the later Magicians; and the Hindoos still regard it as full of virtues.

Pl. XIII. A. 3. The union of Fire and Water is sculptured on a large scale on each side of the gateway of the fort of Agra, as a talisman, although the building is a Mohammedan work.

A point, *Puru*, is the Deity, Self-existing. A circle, *Brahm*, stands for Eternity. Hence a Triangle within a Circle is the emblem of Trinity in Unity; and the Circle inscribed within a Triangle of the converse.

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[1] This mark is cut on the fallen impost lying across the so-called altar. It is nine inches long, and clearly defined; and may be described as the 13th character in series F, ending in apparently the Roman letters LV: having in fact much the form of a *sigla* or *nota scriptoria*. Curious marks, intersecting circles, &c., occur on the rocks at Routin Linn, Old Bewick; Doddington Moor, Northumberland; and on Long Meg, Cumberland. (See 'Archæological Journal,' vol. xix., p. 78.) The Stonehenge mark looks wonderfully like the contraction of the name "Lucius." Had Dr. Stukeley discovered it, he certainly would have assigned the whole fabric on its authority to that British prince so famed in fable.

[2] It must have got this appellation in very ancient times, for in virtue thereof it is sculptured, together with the seven-branched candlestick, on Jewish tombs dating from the Lower Empire.

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Worshippers of Sacti, the Female Principle, mark their sacred jar[1] with a right angle bisected by a line (A. 5). The Vishnaivas with (A. 6),[2] a symbol of wonderful diffusion, for it occurs on the oldest Greek coins, on Etruscan vases, on the Newton Stone, Aberdeen, a Celtic monument; and in ecclesiastical sculptures, styled there the Tetragammaton, being supposed made up of four Γ, and the sound confounded with that of the Sacred *Tetragrammaton*.[3]

Such a mark occurs amongst the signatures of the old Jaina kings (belonging to the days of Buddhist supremacy), and also the very intricate monogram which, when it is seen on Greek coins, is termed a Labyrinth. Other sectarian marks are three parallel lines, arranged vertically or horizontally for different deities; the wheel, the crescent, heart, and vesica piscis, modified in various ways. That the Gnostics borrowed these symbols, adding to them others of Egyptian devising, will be apparent on the comparison of the examples collected in the plates.

Another and a very important circumstance in this discussion must always be kept in view; our Freemasons (as at present organised in the form of a secret society) derive their title from a mere accidental circumstance connected with their actual establishment. It was in the Common Hall of the London guild of Freemasons (the trade) that their first meetings were held under Christopher Wren for president in the time of the Commonwealth. Their real object was political—the restoration of monarchy; hence the necessary exclusion of the public, and the oaths of secrecy enjoined on the members. The pretence of promoting architecture, and the choice of the place where to hold their meetings, suggested by the profession of their president, were no more than blinds to deceive the existing government.

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[1] Similarly the Isis worshippers marked the sacred vase of their goddess, before using it at her rites: of which I shall produce an indubitable example.

[2] The Buddhist *Swastika*, or emblem of Resignation; hence adopted for their seal by ancient princes of that religion. Indeed it may have passed with the same acceptation into the Byzantine category.

[3] The quadriliteral name of God in Hebrew.

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But although this Society was convoked in London, and established branches throughout the country, furnishing also its members with the means of secret recognition, and all for a political end, yet in its true origin it had nothing political in its nature, neither was the meeting in London the commencement of its real existence. The latter was the adaptation to a special purpose of another society, then in its fullest bloom, the Rosicrucians. If we reflect how rankly flourished both astrology and alchemy at that time in England, and that the Rosicrucian sect was essentially of Protestant growth, we may on good grounds suspect that this sect already numbered many members amongst the educated classes, and the philosophers of the day. These were, for the most part, royalists, or at least discontented with the existing government, or else ardent republicans impatient under the new despotism of Cromwell. In the Rosicrucian system Religion and Philosophy, the latter as yet little more than alchemy and astrology, were strangely interwoven; and the terminology of the one employed to express the ideas and aspirations of the other.

The best supported history of the rise of Rosicrucianism, and that accepted by Nicolai (*Tempel-herren*), points out for its founder a Lutheran mystic divine, J. V. Andreæ, almoner to the Duke of Wurtemberg, early in the seventeenth century. His writings, wherein the Rosy Cross prominently figures, were beyond all doubt the first indications making known the existence of the society to the general public. But he appears merely to have borrowed the symbols and occult means of communication existing already from time immemorial amongst the antique community of Alchemists and Astrologers (or in other words all the philosophers and magnates of his day),[1] in order to direct them towards a visionary scheme of his own, the union of all Christian sects in one universal brotherhood; and so commenced his apostleship by attempting the conversion of the most eminent of the mass. The well-meaning enthusiast had disregarded the observation of the sagacious Julian, recorded by Ammian (xxi. 5),

[1] At that time the Emperor Rudolphus II. was the greatest patron of the "Curious Arts" ever recorded in history.

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and confirmed by the experience of every succeeding century (ours as much as any), "nullas infestas hominibus bestias ut sunt sibi ferales plerique Christianorum expertus." Naturally enough his scheme of universal brotherhood dissolved in air as soon as established, but the older philosophy bloomed with renewed vigour under the fresh organisation and euphonious name.

The London Freemasons also borrowed much of their phraseology from Lord Bacon's essay, yet fresh in men's minds, in which, adopting the idea of the "House of Wisdom," a technical term with the Arab astrologers, he proposed the foundation of a "Solomon's House," or a learned community dedicated to experimental philosophy and the advancement of science. These philosophic and royalist plotters, in order to cloak their real object, conducted their proceedings according to the rules laid down therein; and this ceremonial and nomenclature they carefully maintain to the present day.

But setting aside Andreæ's claim to the creation of the immediate parent of Freemasonry, his famous Rosy Cross was, ages before, the well-known badge of the Templars. Considering how universally that Order had spread its branches, obtained possessions, and affiliated to itself multitudes both male and female amongst the laity throughout Europe, it would be an absurdity to believe that all its traditions were swept away at one stroke by the suppression of the Order in 1307. In fact the Parisian *Templiers*, a name still borne by the most important division of the French Freemasons, pretend that they have kept up the succession of Grand Masters unbroken, and even to have preserved the archives of the Order ever since that date. It is said that François I. burnt alive, under circumstances of the most ingenious cruelty (in a "fiery bath"), four unfortunates convicted of being Templars;[1] a fact which proves the continued existence of that Order down to a period not very remote from that of the public manifestation of the Rosicrucians. Certain it is that Umeida, by the same king's orders, extirpated with extraordinary ferocity the remnant of

[1] Communicated to me by a "Brother."

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the Albigenses still lurking in the villages of Provence. This sect, it must be remembered, had from the first been represented by the Catholics as genuine Manicheans, and as transplanted from the East, in comparatively recent times, after the first Crusade; and these statements have much truth in them. If Manicheans, they would naturally have preserved together with their doctrines, the symbols and tokens for mutual recognition so much affected, as history and existing remains declare, amongst all the followers of the Gnosis. Such devices had grown yet more into matters of necessity after persecution had transformed their congregations into actual secret societies.

An important point is the fact that the Rosicrucians are acknowledged even now amongst the Freemasons as a *degree* or class, although disclaimed as the parent stock, a truth which, if allowed, were utterly incompatible with the fraternity's claim to immemorial antiquity. Yet they professedly trace their descent through the Templars up to the fabulous origin they arrogate to their body.

But dismissing all these speculations, we are under no necessity for connecting the Rosicrucians with the old Brothers of the Temple, in order to account for their display of the antique symbols figuring so conspicuously in many of Andreæ's plates, and so diligently illustrated (though often with mistaken ingenuity) by Von Hammer in his "Mystery of Baphomet Revealed." Yet even his misinterpreted examples prove the same truth, and his Baphometic idols adored, according to him, by the suppressed Order, are indubitably astrological and cabalistic sigils of pure Cinque-Cento workmanship and design, and entirely Rosicrucian in their syncretism of symbols. One point alone about these figures suffices to upset Von Hammer's elaborate structure—the Arabic legends cut upon them in the recent Neskhi letter attest their modern date, for had they been contemporary with the Templars the Cufic must have been employed. Yet, at the same time, these legends indicate the fountain head of the tenets held in common by all such fraternities.

Before considering this latter point, the subject will be better approached after a brief review of Von Hammer's theory.

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This is sufficiently set forth in the title of his essay, viz.: "Mysterium Baphometis Revelatum: seu Fratres militiae Templi qua Gnostici et quidem Ophiani, apostasiae, idololatriae et quidem impuritatis convicti per ipsa eorum monumenta." (Published in the Mines de l'Orient, vol. vi.) The treatise is illustrated with numerous admirably-executed copperplates of magical statuettes, architectural ornaments, mystical inscriptions, vases, and coins. As concerns historical evidence, the main foundation for his hypothesis rests upon the Articles of Accusation against the Templars, dispatched by Pope Clement to all archbishops, &c., of which the principal (for his purpose) are[1]—

Art. 42. Item quod ipsi per singulas provincias habeant Idola: videlicet *capita* quorum aliqua habebant tres facies, et alia unam: et aliqua cranium humanum habebant.

Art. 54. Item quod aliquod caput illorum idolorum cingebant seu tangebant chordulis quibus se ipsos cingebant circa camiciam seu carnem.

Art. 55. Quod in hac receptione singulis fratribus praedictae chordulae tradebantur vel aliae longitudinis earum.

In this girding themselves with a consecrated string, there is a striking analogy to the *kosti* prescribed by the Zoroastrian creed and worn by all Parsees; and probably preserved by Manes (a Magus originally) in his new religion. Other articles, not necessary to quote, allege the permission, and even the injunction of unnatural practices. But Von Hammer's idols, it must be remarked, present the general outline of a Roman Jupiter or Hercules, and sometimes Silenus;[2] their heads, or rather their faces, are triple; eyes and ears are profusely distributed all over the body, and they are covered with planetary hieroglyphics. He sets them down without hesitation as figures of the "Old Man of the Templars," styled by one of the witnesses at their trial "une ydole avec trois faces."

These statuettes are for the most part girded with serpents, whose heads they hold in various attitudes, a sufficient ground,

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[1] The entire list of these articles is subjoined to this section.

[2] Classical types entirely unknown to the art of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

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thinks Von Hammer, for adjudging them to the Ophite mysteries.[1] Some carry the Egyptian Tau (Masonic, Martellus, or Knocker) suspended round the neck. In some the character of the heads is female; in others the two sexes are evidently conjoined. But the artistic composition of these fantastic statuettes, and the Roman taste so strongly pervading the whole, show altogether foreign to the quaint simplicity of early mediævalism. The three vases on which he lays so much stress are small cups, the largest but six inches high.[2] They are of stone, and covered with bas reliefs. The second of these reliefs, explained by him as relating to the "Baptism of Fire," does in truth forcibly recall to our minds the Twelve Penances of the Mithraic Rock-Tablets. It exhibits naked boys holding various instruments—the axe, the lyre, the bucket of Anubis—whilst one blowing a horn is feeding the fire within a furnace. The relief on the third, however, savours much of Judaism, displaying the Lifting up of the Brazen Serpent, though the reclining female appears rather as if caressing the serpent than alarmed by its embrace; and the candlestick of the Temple, which a third female is quenching with a vase, at the command of *Mete*, a complete Jewish Solomon, standing in front face with hands raised, whence drop off chains. Interspersed are phalli and other Bacchic and astrological symbols. But the Arabic legends in the modern lettering in this case also, and yet more the classic air of the second design, prove to conviction that we have here nothing more than a portion of the apparatus of the Rosicrucian or alchemical quacks who fattened upon the credulity of that arch-virtuoso Rudolphus II. at the end of the sixteenth century; ever since which date these vases have been treasured up in the Imperial Cabinet.

To give an idea of V. Hammer's style of explaining these monuments, he interprets the Arabic legend on the scroll dis-

[1] This attribute, together with the numerous eyes studding the body, in some instances, seem to betray an acquaintance in the designer with similar Hindoo creations—Indra for example. But similar fancies found their way even into dress. Queen Elizabeth is painted in a gown so embellished.

[2] The figures on them would make one suspect these vases were employed in the concoction of the Elixir of Life.

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played by his *Mete*[1] (a bearded, yet female figure, whose sex is unmistakeably revealed) thus: "Exaltatur Mete germinans. Stirps nostra Ego et Septem fuere. Tu es unus Renegantium: reditus πρωικτος fit."

The fact that so few monuments exist that can certainly be ascribed to the Manicheans (a sect that had swallowed up within itself all the previous forms of Gnosticism during the interval between Constantine's reign and Justinian's) may be explained by the fast-increasing barbarism of the times that produced so little in the way of art, however degraded.[2] Or it may be attributed to the rigid character of the superstition itself, begotten between Magism and Judaism, and therefore regarding all imagery as idolatrous and sinful.

The history of the diffusion of Manicheism throughout Europe is briefly this. In the middle of the seventh century, under Constans II., a native of Samosata, Constantinus Sylvanus, broached the Paulician heresy, so called from its combination of the doctrines of St. Paul with Zoroaster's, but approximating more closely to the former than did the similar and more ancient theosophism of Manes. The new teacher readily united into one church the remnants of the Gnostic sects, especially the numerous Manicheans of Armenia, and the old Zoroastrians of Pontus and Cappadocia. Incessantly persecuted by the Byzantine emperors,[3] their chief, Carbeas, founded a new capital, the impregnable city of Tephrice, in the mountains near Trebizond,

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[1] Whom he makes the same as the Sophia of the Ophites.

[2] Their sacred books, their prayers, and their spells, were made out on perishable materials, parchments and papyri, diligently sought out and destroyed by every persecutor.

[3] The extirpation of Gnosticism was vigorously prosecuted by the last emperors of the West, and by the Byzantines, both orthodox and Arian. In this course the first example was set by Magnus Maximus, the British usurper under Theodosius, by the execution of Priscilian, bishop of Avila, and his principal followers, in spite of the interposition of St. Martin.* In the same century Epiphanius boasts of having by his information caused seventy women, even of rank, to be sent into exile, through the seductions of some in whose number he had himself been drawn into joining their sect. It may reasonably be suspected that this worthy renegade had in this case saved himself from the fate of his fellow-religionists by turning evidence against them, on the opening of the persecution.

* Theodosius also made Manicheism a capital offence. Priscillian was a modified Manichean.

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which was ultimately destroyed by Basil, the Macedonian, about A.D. 880. In the middle of the preceding century Constantine Copronymus had transplanted a considerable body of these Armenian Paulicians to Thrace, where their numbers were largely increased in the tenth century by a colony transplanted from the Chalybian Hills (Caucasus) into the valleys of Mount Hæmus by John Zimisces. Here their missionaries converted the neighbouring Bulgarians, whence a new and more odious name to these sectaries. Warlike and fearless of death, we find them serving in the armies of the Byzantine emperors, for instance, of Alexius Comnenus, in their wars with the Normans of Sicily. From this latter island they diffused their doctrines through Italy: they were numerous even in Rome and Milan, but spread with astonishing rapidity throughout Provence. Twelve canons of Orleans were burnt alive at once on the charge of belonging to the sect. These few facts, selected from the long extent of their history, will suffice to show the wide diffusion of their doctrines during the very ages when the Templars were at the summit of their prosperity and influence.

The Druses of Mount Lebanon, though claiming for their founder the Egyptian caliph Hakim, are in all probability the remains of the numerous Gnostic sects noticed by Procopius as flourishing there most extensively in his own times. Of their tenets nothing authentic has ever come to light; the popular belief amongst their neighbours is, that they adore an idol in the form of a calf, and hold in their secret meetings orgies similar to those laid to the charge of the Ophites in Roman, of the Templars in mediæval, of the Freemasons [continental] in modern times. But the point concerning us *here* is, that these Druses hold the residence of their Supreme Head to be in Scotland; a tradition evidently handed down from the times when the Templars were all powerful in their neighbourhood. Now it is a singular coincidence that our Freemasons are often spoken of by German writers as the "Scottish Brethren," but for what reason I have been unable to discover.

The masters of mediæval Europe in philosophy, science, and many of the arts, were the Arabs, more especially those of Spain; and with their teaching they communicated other ideas besides

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those strictly comprised therein. Yet the connexion between all was of itself so close, that such a result was absolutely inevitable. So much of primitive Gnosticism before its admixture with Christian revelation was based upon Magian notions, that is, on astrological ideas, that it is often most difficult to decide whether an engraved stone be merely an astrological talisman or involves a religious object. Thus the Decani of the Signs, whose figures Teucer records were commonly worn as amulets, are often seen bearing the name of Michael, and of other Jewish angels. In the flourishing times of Mohammedanism, before the spread of universal ignorance had established everywhere the reign of unquestioning orthodoxy, there existed, and probably originated in Persia, a numerous body comprising the learned of the religion, styling themselves Sufi, clearly deriving this title from the Greek Σοφοι, their predecessors. Now this name appears to have been assumed as equivalent in meaning to the old Γνωστικοι, "those understanding the depth of things divine;" and the tenets they held were precisely those of the older *Antitactæ*[1] as to the indifference of all actions involving the body alone, and the invalidity of the Jewish moral law (the production of the Demiurgus) as to the regulation of the conduct of the illuminati. As it is a constant charge against the primitive Gnostics that they conformed without scruple, outwardly at least, to the established worship of the state or city they inhabited, it is certain that the sects of Syria and Egypt, such as the Manicheans of the Lebanon, so remorselessly exterminated by Justinian, and their brother sectaries throughout Asia Minor, persecuted with equal zeal by the Byzantine emperors, until all those regions were wrested from their sway by the early caliphs,—it is both natural and certain that all such religionists would gladly shelter themselves under the new religion of their tolerant Arab conquerors in the seventh and eighth centuries, and either profess Mohammedanism, and save their liberty, or continue as tributaries in unmolested exercise of their former faith, being confounded by their unenquiring rulers with the general mass of infidels. "The sects of Egypt and Syria," says Gibbon, "enjoyed a free toleration

[1] Literally, "Ordinance-haters."

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under the shadow of the Arabian caliphs;" and thus maintained their secret notions and observances without further notice or molestation.

Now inasmuch as these *Sufi* were composed exclusively of the learned amongst the Persians and Syrians, and learning by that time meant little more than a proficiency in medicine and astrology, the two points that brought the Eastern sages into amicable contact with their barbarous invaders from the West, it is easy to see how the latter may have imbibed the secret doctrines simultaneously with the science of those who were their instructors in all matters pertaining to science and art. The Sufi doctrine involved the grand idea of one universal creed which could be secretly held under any profession of an outward faith; and in fact took virtually the same view of religious systems as that in which the ancient philosophers had regarded such matters. In our day the admission of an universal religion by the Freemasons, expressed by their requisition from the candidate of nothing more than an acknowledgment of the belief in one God, is regarded with pious horror by the bigots of every variety in the Christian scheme.

That the constant intercourse between Syria and Europe, maintained, first by the flocks of pilgrims to Jerusalem, then by Crusades, by the establishment of the Frankish kingdom in that city and of the various principalities on the coast, and, above all, by the permanent foundation of the two great military Orders having their head-quarters in Palestine, produced vast effects upon the Western nations, more especially on those seated upon the Mediterranean, is a fact which cannot be overlooked. Arab influence manifests itself in the poetry of the Troubadours; like its origin half amatory half mystic, as dissimilar to the practical character of the Roman lighter verse as the pointed architecture, its forms suggested by the tent and curtain (the germ of which the same cause transplanted into the centre of France),[1] is to the massy Romanesque edifices which it so rapidly

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[1] The Crusades were eminently a French idea, and the soldiers in the most important, almost exclusively Frenchmen or princes holding territories in France.

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replaced. How many arts, the most prized in those ages, are importations from Syria and Egypt! glass-working, in all the processes connected with the manufacture of ornamental and coloured vessels, and painted windows, damasquining on steel, silk cultivation, enamelling, majolica, and the coinage of gold. In Italian most of the terms applied to the productions of such arts are purely Arabic, *e. g.* zecca, tazza, rocca (for citadel), cameo, &c.[1]

As regards the diffusion of Oriental notions in Europe, the most important circumstance bearing upon our subject is the eagerness with which Manicheism was embraced in France during the two centuries preceding the fall of the Templars. The latter we find during their residence in Syria exhibiting a tolerant spirit, the most inconsistent possible with the original object of their foundation; forming alliances with any of the petty Moslem chiefs able to assist them in holding their own against the common enemy, the Soldan of Egypt. Amongst these allies figures the head of a true society of *Antitactæ*, the Chief of the Assassins[2] or Old Man of the Mountain, *i. e.* Lebanon.

The Baphometic idol or "old man's head," the adoration of which is the constant charge against the Templars, bears a strong resemblance to the rude designs given by me in Plate ii. 3, vi. 1, 3, so frequently occurring cut upon large green jaspers; figures whereof neither work nor design agree with those marking the true Gnostic talismans dating from the Lower Empire, but rather have something in them bespeaking an Arabian and Mediæval origin. Von Hammer, in his elaborate treatise, amongst the numerous examples he has so indefatigably collected, adduces many symbols in their nature quite foreign to Catholicism, and indeed of a truly Gnostic and Oriental character. Amongst these the most striking are the Three Vases (already described) with their unintelligible Arabic legends, which he believes to be the

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[1] Italian Gothic, more especially the civil branch, as exemplified in the buildings of the great maritime cities—Venice, Genoa, Pisa—is a direct importation from Cairo and Rosetta, and has no connection at all with the contemporary French style.

[2] A name derived from their practice of intoxicating themselves with Hashish, or extract of hemp, before attempting any of the desperate missions enjoined by their head; thus the word was adopted into the Italian in its present sense.

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true *Sangraal*, that mystic cup shining so conspicuously in the early romances of chivalry; the quest for the Sangraal[1] being one of the high adventures prosecuted in the Mort d'Arthur. It is true that at first sight these singular vases or "Fonts," as he terms them, according to his hypothesis concerning the Baptism of Mete (or of Wisdom into which the neophyte had to be re-baptized) afford a much stronger foundation for his charges than any of the other monuments he has brought forward. For the obscene sculptures placed so conspicuously in their churches, in allusion, as he explains, to the Venus Mascula therein adored, are to be found equally abundant in other mediæval churches totally unconnected with the Templars (notably on the capitals of that at Arcueil near Paris). Such sculptures may either have a moral concealed in them, the censure of some particular vice; or, yet more likely, be merely the ebullition of the gross wit of the times. As for his "Idols," their recent character has been sufficiently demonstrated above. But his great error lies in his attempting to identify the heresy embraced by the Templars with the Ophite, that primitive form of the Gnosis, and one swallowed up, ages before their foundation, in the over-spreading flood of Manicheism, which at its source Syria, doubtless had carried away as large a portion amongst the inquiring spirits of the Temple, as it was intoxicating at the same time in Italy and Provence. The greatest absurdity, however, that he has committed is the building so much upon the inexplicable word *Mete* which he finds in these inscriptions; for the archaic form *Metis* was never used by the Gnostics as synonymous with *Sophia*, which his whole argument assumes as an established fact. And in the same strange manner does he interpret the numerous Masons' marks he has collected, though all in reality are identical in character with those figured in my plates.

The profession of continence, at least as far as regards the propagation of the species, which was the doing in a special manner the work of the Demiurgus, and perpetuating the reign

[1] Perfect chastity was the necessary condition for attaining unto the sight of this wondrous vessel.

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of Matter; this profession was from the first the grand distinction of every form of the Gnosis. The strange means they adopted to keep their vow inviolate may be learnt by referring to Clemens Alexandrinus, where he quotes their explanation of the ancient fable of Saturn devouring his own children, and to Epiphanius in his account of the Ophite Eucharist. In no other doctrine of the Gnostics is the Buddhist influence more traceable than in this, for any merit in asceticism, merely for its own sake, was never dreamed of by the Greek philosophy, the offspring of reason in its brightest and most uncorrupted development. But such an affectation of purity most mightily conduced to the spread of the Gnostic tenets in every age of their promulgation.[1] Any teaching is sure to obtain flocks of converts which, in addition to the promise of explaining fully matters too high for man's understanding, makes a great profession of asceticism, and holds forth the exaltation of the poor and the damnation of the rich and luxurious. For the vulgar ever admire what is difficult, merely because it is difficult, however useless be the result in itself or even pernicious in its consequences if fully carried out; and inasmuch as the abstinence from sensual pleasures is for them the hardest of all tasks, so is the show of similar self-denial the surest means of obtaining influence over brutish intelligences incapable of distinguishing the means from the end. Moreover such doctrines work powerfully upon the natural enviousness and greed of vulgar souls; those actually poor being ever the vast majority in the land, they most joyfully accept the teaching that promises the punishment of their betters hereafter, merely on the score of their superior happiness in this life; and as scarcely any person ever considers himself to be a rich man, but is constantly climbing upwards towards a point that still recedes before him at each successive stage of his ascent, even such a one has the comfortable assurance that he himself continues in the list of the poor, and that the anathema is the heritage of the one immediately above him on the social ladder. In this lies the secret

[1] As the experience of all ages attests, from Guatama's to Hans Knipperdolling's.

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of the success of Manicheism, its absorption into itself of all the more ancient Gnostic forms, and, more than all, of the vast rapidity with which it overspread those provinces where the Catholic Church was the most richly endowed, and its clergy, especially the regulars, attracted the greatest envy by their affluence and pomp.

The Templars began their career in actual poverty, leading a hard, laborious life—that of the monk and the soldier combined. To mark this, the original device or common seal of the Order was two knights mounted on the same horse, the most striking exemplification of poverty that could be imagined in the days of chivalry. Becoming ashamed of such a badge as they grew in power, they altered it into the somewhat similar outline of a Pegasus—at least this is the old tradition. Perhaps, however, there was from the first, in the choice of the Winged Horse in his upward flight, an allusion to the heavenward destination of their chivalry. And when their career was drawing to its close, amidst the wealth and luxury that brought down upon them their cruel destruction, the brethren, doubtless by some ingenious mode of self-deception, flattered themselves into a belief that they were continuing to keep their vows as faithfully as in the very springtime of their institution.

The strange and obscene ceremonies observed on the admission of the aspirant into the various secret societies that flourished under the Lower Empire and during the Middle Ages, are all only faint traditions of the penances or "tortures" exacted from the neophyte in the Mithraic Cave, some account of which has already been given (p. 51). How widely diffused were the *Mithraici*, especially in the West, appears from the innumerable caves, altars, and inscriptions still existing in Germany, France, and this country. In these Celtic regions the Mithraic religion, it would seem, was so readily embraced, and flourished so extensively, on account of its close analogy to the ancient Druidical faith; for in addition to Pliny's important statement (xxx. 4), "Gallias utique possedit (Magicam) et quidem ad nostram memoriam: namque Tiberii Cæsaris principatus sustulit Druidas eorum et hoc genus vatum medicorumque per senatus consultum. Quid ego hæc commemorem in arte Oceanum quoque transgressa

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et ad naturæ inane pervecta? Britannia hodieque celebrat tantis ceremoniis ut dedisse Persis videri possit: adeo ista toto mundo consensere quanquam discordi et sibi ignoto. Nec satis æstimari potest quantum Romanis debeatur qui sustulere monstra in quibus hominem occidere religiosissimum erat, mandi vero etiam saluberrimum." By "Magica" Pliny understands the rites instituted by Zoroaster, and first published by *Osthanes*, "domestic chaplain" to Xerxes in his Grecian expedition. Besides this declaration, the revived Druidism, as it appears in its final brief struggle [1] with Christianity, as it is set forth in the mystical poems of Taliesin, composed in the seventh century, is a religion offering in many points a wonderful analogy to the ancient Persian tenets. Thus it expressly declares the existence and antagonism of the Two Principles, the final triumph of Good and the renovation of all things.[2] Now Manes himself was nothing more than a Zoroastrian heretic, having engrafted upon his proper religion the transcendental Buddhistic notions picked up by his master Terminthus during his Indian travels. Is there not a possibility that some sparks of the antique Mithraic faith may have lingered unnoticed in the West until made to flame up anew by the importation of its latest descendant, Manicheism? Indeed one may even now discover a parody of the awful antique maintained in the minutest particulars by the modern convivial *hetæria*, for the soldier (Jerome's Miles), the lowest grade amongst the Mithraic illuminati, has yet a representative in the armed man or Tiler, an official, the last in the scale, who stands sentinel at the door of the Freemasons' secret conclave.

But to return to our subject; the foregoing considerations seem to afford a rational explanation of the manner in which the

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[1] During the short lived independence of the Britons after the withdrawal of the Roman legions in 440.

[2] There is a curious analogy between the Druidical temple, always circular, whether composed of natural blocks, or as in that latest example at Lantef in Bretagne (Caylus, vi., pl. 124) of two concentric enclosures arcaded in regular masonry, with the form always appropriated to the worship of Fire, as in the Roman Vesta temples, and the great Magian shrine at Gazacus, destroyed in Heraclius's invasion (Cedrenus, i. 723). The Guebre fire-temples at Balkh are still open circular towers.

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genuine Gnostic symbols (whether still retaining any mystic meaning, or kept as mere lifeless forms, let the Order declare) have come down to these times, still paraded as things holy and of deep significance. Treasured up amongst the dark sectaries of the Lebanon and the Sufis of Persia, communicated to the Templars, and transmitted to their heirs the Brethren of the Rosy Cross, they have kept up an unbroken existence.[1] For instance, Nicolai thinks that their Pentagon (Pentacle) or Solomon's Seal was the symbol mentioned in the "Ophite formula"[2] as offered by the ascending soul to each planetary genius in order to extort from them a free passage to the supernal sphere. It has been above noticed with what reverence this symbol is yet regarded by the Hindoos. In its five-pointed figure may be traced the same notion of the hidden virtues of that numeral, as in the Delphic E similarly interpreted by Plutarch. In the Middle Ages this figure being considered as a charm against fire (unavailing, alas! to its knightly wearers),[3] was always painted up in buildings liable, from their destination, to its ravages, and therefore more particularly in brew-houses, as peculiarly exposed to such a danger.

And thus these symbols, in their origin embodying the highest mysteries of Indian theosophy, afterwards eagerly embraced by the subtle genius of the Alexandrian Greeks, and combined by them with the hidden wisdom of Egypt, in whose captivating and profound doctrines the few bright spirits of the Middle Ages sought a refuge from the childish fables then constituting orthodoxy, engendered by monkery upon the primal Buddhistic stock; these sacred symbols exist even now, but serve

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[1] Lessing boldly asserts (Fortsetzung des Ernst, p. 53), "the Lodges of the Templars were in the very highest repute in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries; and out of such a Templars' Lodge, that *had been constantly kept up* in the middle of London, was the Society of Freemasons established in the seventeenth century by Sir Christopher Wren."

[2] For instance in its invocation to Ildabaoth (genius of Saturn), "O First and Seventh One! born to rule with power; chief Word of the pure Intelligence, perfect work in the sight of the Father and the Son, by presenting to thee in this *Seal the Sign of Life*, I open the gate which thy power hath closed to the world, and freely traverse thy dominion." A sufficient reason this for its appearance on tombstones.

[3] As Béranger sings—

"Les hérétiques n'ont pas trouvé
Onguent pour la brûlure."

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merely for the insignia of what at best is but a charitable, probably nothing more in its present form than a convivial, institution. So the golden Pentagon of Apollo, which of yore blazed high above the Delphic shrine, and which, though shorn of its dignity, still served during the Middle Ages to defend cities against the perils of lightning and of fire, has come at last to be degraded (throughout Germany) into the outward and visible sign of a tavern.

CHARGES AGAINST THE TEMPLARS.

The following are the main articles of accusation amongst the 120, sent by the Pope to all archbishops, bishops, and papal commissaries, upon which to examine the knights: in accordance with the bull "Faciens misericordiam" (Du Puy's Hist. p. 262)

Isti sunt Articuli super quibus inquiretur contra Fratres Militiæ Templi quorum mentio in superiore bulla Papæ Clementis V. facta.

Primo, quod licet assererent sancte ordinem fuisse institutum et a Sede Apostolica approbatum, tamen in receptione fratrum prædicti Ordinis et quandoque post, servabantur atque fiebant a prædictis Fratribus quæ sequuntur.

1. Videlicet quod quilibet in receptione sua vel quandoque post, vel quam cito commoditatem ad hæc recipiens habere poterat abnegabat Christum aliquando crucifixum, et quandoque Jesum, et quandoque Deum, et quandoque Beatam Virginem, et quandoque omnes Sanctos Sanctasque Dei, inductus seu monitus per illos qui eum recipiebant.

5. Item, quod dicebant et dogmatizabant receptores illis quos recipiebant, Christum non esse Verum Deum, vel quandoque Jesum, vel quandoque Crucifixum.

6. Item, quod dicebant illis quos recipiebant ipsum fuisse Filium prophetam.

7. Item, ipsum non fuisse passum pro redemptione humani generis, nec crucifixum sed pro sceleribus suis.

8. Item, quod nec receptores nec recepti habebant spem salvationis habendæ per Jesum, et hoc dicebant illis quos recipiebant: vel æquipollens, vel simile.

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9. Item, quod faciebant illos quos recipiebant spuere super Crucem seu super figuram seu sculptum Crucis et imaginem Christi; licet interdum qui recipiebantur spuerent juxta.

10. Item, quod ipsam Crucem pedibus conculcari quandoque mandabant.

12. Item, quod mingebant et conculcabant interdum et eos mingere faciebant super ipsam Crucem et hoc in die Veneris Sanctæ aliquoties faciebant.

14. Item, quod adorabant *quendam Cattum* sibi in ipsa congregatione apparentem quandoque.

15. Item, quod ipsum faciebant in vituperatione Christi et fidei orthodoxæ.

16. Item, quod non credebant in sacrificium altaris.

20. Item, quod credebant et dicebant eis quod Magnus Magister a peccatis poterat absolvere.

26. Item, quod in receptione Fratrum hujus Ordinis, vel circa, interdum recipiens et receptus aliquando se deosculabantur in ore vel in umbilico seu in ventre nudo, vel in ano seu in spina dorsi.

29. Item, aliquando in virga virili.

30. Item, quod in receptione sua, illa faciebant juxta eos qui recipiebant quod Ordinem non exirent.

32. Item, quod receptiones istas clandestine faciebant.

33. Item, quod propter hoc contra dictum Ordinem vehemens suspicio a longis temporibus laboravit.

36. Item, quod Fratribus quos recipiebant dicebant quod de invicem possent unus cum alio commisceri carnaliter.

37. Item, quod hoc licitum erat illis facere.

38. Item, quod debebant hoc facere ad invicem et pati.

42. Item, quod ipsi per singulas provincias habebant *Idola*, videlicet Capita quorum aliqua habebant *Tres Facies*, et alia unam: et aliqua cranium humanum habebant.

43. Item, quod illa idola vel illud idolum adorabant et specialiter in eorum magnis capitulis et congregationibus.

49. Item, quod dicebatur quod illud Caput poterat eos salvare.

50. Item, quod divites facere.

51. Item, quod omnes divinos ordines dabat eis.

52. Item, quod facit *arbores* florere.

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53. Item, quod terram germinare.

54. Item, quod aliquid Caput prædictorum idolorum cingebant seu tangebant chordulis quibus se ipsos cingebant circa camisiam seu carnem.

55. Item, quod in sui receptione singulis Fratribus prædictæ chordulæ tradebantur vel aliæ longitudinis earum.

56. Item, quod in venerationem idoli hæc faciebant.

57. Item, quod injungebant iis quod dictis chordulis præmitelitur se cingerent et continue portarent: et hoc faciebant etiam de nocte.

61. Item, quod qui nolebant prædicta in sui receptione facere aut post interficiebantur, aut carceri mancipabantur.

64. Item, quod injungebant eis per Sacramentum ne prædicta non revelarent.

65. Item, quod sub pœna mortis vel carceris.

68. Item, quod si capiebantur quod revelarent, morte vel carcere affligebantur.

69. Item, quod injungebant eis quod non *confiterentur* aliquibus nisi fratribus ejusdem Ordinis.

73. Item, quod prædicta fiebant et servabantur in locis ultra mare in quibus Magister Generalis et Conventus ejusdem Ordinis pro tempore sunt morali.

74. Item, quod prædicta Abnegatio Crucis fiebat aliquando in præsentia Magistri et conventus prædictorum.

79. Item, quod de *consuetudine antiqua.*

80. Item, quod de *Statuto* Ordinis prædicti.

83. Item, quod receptiones Fratrum dicti Ordinis fiebant communiter modis prædictis in toto Ordine supradicto.

90. Item, quod alium modum recipiendi in dicto Ordine fratres non servabant.

97. Item, quod clam consueverunt tenere sua Capitula.

98. Item, quod clam, ac in primo somno, vel in prima vigilia noctis.

99. Item, quod clam, et expulsa tota alia familia de domo et clausuris domus: ut omnes de familia illis noctibus quibus teneant Capitula jaceant extra.

100. Item, quod clam: quod sic se includunt ad tenenda Capitula ut omnes januas domus et ecclesiæ in quibus tenent

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Capitula firment adeo firmiter quod nullus sit nec esse possit accessus ad eos nec juxta: ut possit quicunque videre vel audire de factis vel dictis eorum.

101. Item, quod clam adeo: quod scilicet ponere *excubiam super tectum* domus vel ecclesiæ in quibus tenent capitulum ad providendum nequis locum in quo teneant capitulum appropinquet.

104. Item, quod major error viget et viguit quod ipsi tenent et tenuerunt retroactis temporibus quod Magister Magnus possit absolvere fratres Ordinis a peccatis etiam non confessatis, quæ confiteri propter aliquam erubescentiam vel timorem penitentiæ injungendæ vel infligendæ omiserint.

108. Item, quod quidquid Magnus Magister maxime cum conventu suo faciebat, ordinabat, statuebat, totus Ordo tenere et observare habebat; et eadem observabat.

109. Item, quod hæc potestas sibi competebat et in eo residebat ab antiquo.

114. Item, quod multi Fratres predicti Ordinis, propter fœditates et errores ejusdem Ordinis exierunt nonnulli ad religionem aliam transeuntes, et nonnulli in seculo remanentes.

116. Item, quod predicta omnia et singula nota sunt et manifesta inter Fratres Ordinis.

117. Item, quod de his est publica vox, opinio communis et fama tam inter Fratres dicti Ordinis quam extra.

120. Item, quod Magnus Magister Ordinis, Visitator, Magnus Præceptor Cypri, Pictaviæ, Normandiæ, et quamplures alii Præceptores et nonnulli Fratres, dicti Ordinis premissa confessi fuerint tam in judicio quam extra coram solemnibus personis, et in pluribus locis etiam personis publicis.

SIX ARTICLES ALLEGED AGAINST THE ITALIAN TEMPLARS.

1. Tirones qui primum religionem Templariorum ingrediebantur Deum blasphemabant et Christum, Beatam Dei Matrem Mariam et omnes sanctos abnegabant, super Christum et imaginem Jesu Christi spuebant et pedibus conculcabant: Christum

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falsum fuisse prophetam neque pro redemptione generis humani passum aut crucifixum esse affirmabant.

2. Caput quodam faciem albam quasi humanam præ se ferens capillis nigris et crispantibus et circa collum deauratis quod quidem Militis Sancti fuerat cultu latriæ adorabant, oraciones eo faciebant, et cingulis quibusdam illud cingentes illis ipsis quasi salutares forent se ipsos accingebant.

3. Verba *consecrationis* in missa faciendo omittebant.

4. Tirones receptos osculis in ore, umbilico, et membris quæ pudor occuluit in loco capitulari mox atque habitum induissent fatigabant.

5. Aversa libidine omnes promiscue sese inquinabant.

6. Nemini revelare quæ vel in aurora vel in primo crepusculo faciebant juramento prestito promittebant, aliaque nefanda perpetrabant.

ELEVEN ARTICLES GIVEN IN THE CHRONIQUE DE ST. DENYS.

Vie de Philippe le Bel. Chap. 66.

Les forfaits pourquoi les Templiers furent ars et condamnez et pris, et contre eux approuvez (si comme l'on dit) et d'aucuns d'eux en prison reconnuz s'ensuivent.

Le Premier Article de leur forfaits est tel: Qu'ils ne croient point en Dieu fermement, et quand ils faisoient un nouveau Templier si n'estoit de nullui sceu comment ils le faisoient, mais bien etoit veu et sceu comment ils lui donnoient les draps.

2. Quand icelui nouvel Templier avait vetu les draps de l'Ordre tantot etoit mene en une chambre obscure, et tantot le nouvel Templier remoit Dieu par sa male aventure, et passant pardessu la croix et en sa douce figure crachoit.

3. Car tantot apres ils alloient adorer une *Idole*, et pour certain icelle Idole etait une *vieille peau* ainsi comme toute embame et comme toile polie, et illecques certes le Templier mettoit sa tres vile foi et creance, et en lui tres fermement croyoient; et en icelle avoit es fosses des yeux *escarboncles* reluisans comme clarte du ciel: et pour certain toute leur esperance etoit en

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icelle et etoit leur Dieu souverain, et memement se affioit en lui de bon cœur.

4. Car ils reconnurent aussi la trahison que S. Louis eut en Outremer: il fut pris en ces parties et mis en prison: et Acre une cite trahirent ils par leur grande misprision.

5. Que si le peuple Chrestien fut prochainement alle es parties de l'Outremer ils avoient faits tels ordinances et convenances au Soldan de Babilon qu'ils avoient par leur mauvaisseté apertement les Chrestiens vendus.

6. Que eux reconnurent du tresor du Roy avoir donne, qui au Roy avoit fait contraicte, laquelle chose etoit moult dommageable au Royaume.

7. Car si comme lon dit ils connurent le peche d'heresie, et pour leur hypocrisie habitoient l'un a l'autre charnellement. Pourquoi c'etoit merveille que Dieu souffroit tels crimes et sodomies detestables etre faits: mais Dieu par sa piete souffre faire moult de felonies.

8. Que si nul Templier bien afferme en leur idolatrie mourut en sa malice aucunement ils le faisoient *ardoir* et de la poussiere de lui donnoient a manger aux nouveaux Templiers et ainsi plus fermes leur idolatrie et leur creance tenoient, et de tout deprisoient la Croix de Jesu-Christ.

9. Que si aucun Templier eut eu autour lui ceinte ou liee une *courroie* laquelle etoit leur *Mathometerie* apres ce jamais sa foi ne fut reconnue: tant avoit ellee sa foi et sa loi affirmee et affichee.

10. Que leur Ordre ne doit nul enfant baptiser ni lever des saints fonds tant comme ils pourront abstenir, ni entrer en l'hostel ou femme gist d'enfant s'il ne s'en va du tout en tout a reculons, laquelle chose est detestable a raconter. Et ainsi pour cieulx forfaits et crimes furent du Souverain eveque, Pape Clement, et de plusieurs Archeveques, eveques, cardinaulx, condamnes.

11. Car encore faisoient ils pis: car un enfant nouveau engendre d'un Templier et une pucelle etoit *cuit et roti*[1] au feu

[1] This is the old scandal of the "Perfect Passover" (p. 129). The first Christians were accused by the world, says Minucius Felix, of in-

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et toute la graisse otee, et de celle etoit sacree et ointe leur Idole.

The charges against the Order are fully discussed by Anton (who attempts to disprove them) in his 'Versuch einer Geschichte des Tempelherren Ordens' (1781), and by Fr. Nicolai (who takes the other side) in his 'Versuch über die Beschuldigungen welche dem Tempelherren Orden gemacht worden: und über dessen Geheimniss' (1782).

Ε *DELPHICUM.*

The letter Ε placed so conspicuously in many of the Gnostic inscriptions is the famous Ε of Delphi, on the real signification of which Plutarch has left us a most interesting treatise. He gives the various theories then current as to its origin. The Greeks with their wonted vanity explained it as denoting the mere numeral, and referring to the genuine and original number of the famous "Wise Men," which was in later times made up to the now established *Seven* by the addition of two others having but slight claims to that honour. The legend went that these Five Wise Men to commemorate the accidental meeting of all at Delphi had dedicated the numeral carved in wood; which decaying was replaced by the Corinthians with one in bronze, and this again at a later date by Livia Augusta was transmuted into gold, as more consistent with the dignity of that god whose offspring her husband boasted himself to be, and whose received image he represented in his features.

Others explained the letter as representing by its proper sound in the Greek mouth the declaration εἰ, "Thou art," addressed to the Godhead, and equivalent in force to the epithet the "Living God" given by the Jews to Jehovah, and imitated by the Christians in their Ο ΩΝ, a title of the Deity.

But it is evident that the primary meaning of the symbol was

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ducing each neophyte on his admission to plunge a knife into an infant concealed under a heap of flour; the body then serving for a banquet to the whole congregation. After they had become the dominant party, they transferred the charge to their own dissenters.

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numerical alone, and denoted the number Five, a number sacred in itself, and not so from its reference to the fabled Sages of Greece. The idea of its virtue is of Indian source, and connected with the five-headed form assigned to Brahma. From India it made its way to Delphi, in company with the Gorgon-heads, themselves masks of Bhavani the Destroyer, that guarded the oracle itself: a singular connexion recorded by Euripides in his Ion. The Omphalos indeed, "shaded with wreaths and encompassed by Gorgons," was, as its form shows (with Apollo thereon seated on the coins of the Seleucidæ, his direct descendants),[1] nothing more than the Brahminical Lingam.[2] In the chapter upon Incantations (p. 171) the connexion between Bhavani in another character and the Ephesian Diana has already been pointed out.

In the first dawn of Grecian philosophy we find Pythagoras building his whole system upon the mystic virtue of Numbers; and Plato has in his "Republic" a section on that head which Basilides himself might claim for its profound obscurity. In our times; with the Sikhs, to hold a Punch or council of five was the formal mode of deliberating upon all important matters of state. As all mysteries have a ludicrous side, this holy number has given its name to the well-known beverage from the five ingredients that go to its concoction: perhaps, because it necessarily attended the coming together in conclave of that mystic number of Europeans at the period when our language was enriched by the introduction of so many other Hindostanee words.

But after all, this lunar-shaped ϵ may have in its true origin been nothing more than a Hindoo caste-mark: indeed, it becomes the mark of Vishnu's followers, ψ, if placed upon its side.[3] It must also be borne in mind that this figure was hallowed at Delphi, many centuries before that shape of the vowel came into the Greek alphabet, an alteration which only dates from Domitian's times.

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[1] Or in the earlier vase-painting, where it is clasped by Orestes seeking sanctuary from the pursuing Eumenides.

[2] Always sculptured as an obtuse cone, a symbol having nothing obscene in its appearance; the hidden meaning being a matter of interpretation for the few.

[3] See the patterns of "Caste Marks," Pl. XIII. A.

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DESCRIPTION OF THE PLATES.

(The gems are drawn to double the actual size.)

PLATE I.

No. 1. The Jackal-headed Anubis, furnished with two pair of wings springing from his sides and thighs, holding in each hand a huge scorpion by the tail. The latter attribute shows the figure to be a Decanus of that Sign. Above his head is a scarabeus with expanded wings; and in the field the sun and the moon, adjuncts marking the astrological character of this talisman, which therefore must be assigned to the class of Abraxoids. Loadstone: no legend.

No. 2. Anubis walking; in each hand a long Egyptian sceptre terminating in a ball; in the field the sun and the moon: the whole enclosed in a sunken circle. *Rev.* ΜΙΧΑΗΛ between four stars: the Cabalists make Michael the angel of the sun. Plasma of bad quality.

No. 3. Anubis having two heads; one a jackal's, the other, being maned on the neck, is probably equine. In his four hands he bears on one side two swords, on the other two blazing flambeaux. One of his feet is unmistakeably hoofed. Here we see the exact Anubis described by Apuleius as displaying a face alternately black as night, and golden as the day. The attribute of the swords refers to the first, the torches to the latter form, and indicate his office of Psychopompus both in the infernal and the celestial regions.

Rev. ΠΕΡΑ-ΑΜΒΩ-ΥΒΑΙΑ-ΚΞΙΚ-Λ: Coptic.[1] Loadstone; the engraving tolerable.

No. 4. Abraxas, as usually figured, but here equipped with a sword, not a scourge, and a round buckler of the Persian form. No legend. Plasma.

No. 5. Cancer grasping with one claw at the lunar crescent. Around, in large letters, TINNITAENEI. The word ITA occurs frequently in such formulæ, but its meaning has not been explained.

[1] An address to Anubis, whose phonetic name *Ambo* is clearly legible.

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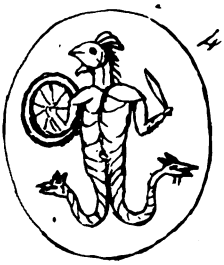


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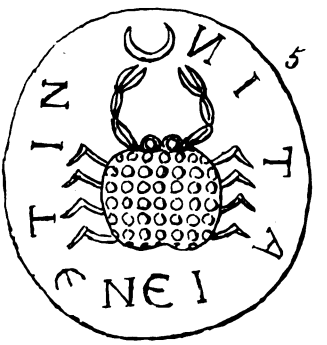
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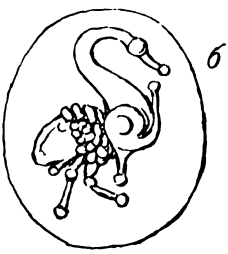
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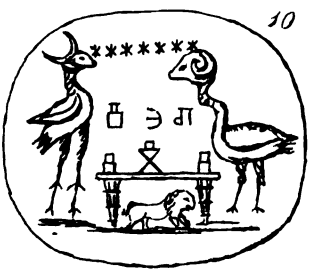
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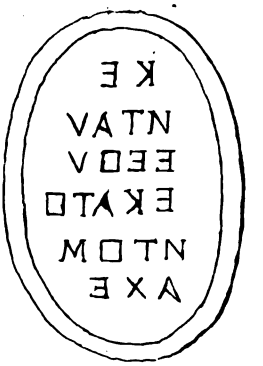


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Rev. ΡΩΜΥΛΑ ΕΓΕΝΝΗΣΕ ΣΩΣΙΠΑΤΡΙΑΝ, "Romula has given birth to Sosipatria," which shows this to have been an astrological memorial of the nativity of Sosipatria, born when the moon was in Cancer. An imperishable evidence of the rising of one little bubble upon the surface of the ocean of eternity; which burst some sixteen centuries ago, and left no other trace. Yellow Jasper: large oval; the letters well engraved. See Plate III. 6 for the inscription.

No. 6. Fantastic Bird, the outline representing an Ibis, ingeniously composed from a dolphin placed on a ram's head, and furnished with legs. Talisman, uniting the influence of Neptune and Mercury within the form of the bird, which the Egyptians made the symbol of Thoth and the Moon: a fitting device for a trader. Calcedony.

No. 7. Abraxas brandishing his whip, as if chasing away the evil genii. On his shield the titles ΙΨ. ΙΑΩ. Neat work. Green Jasper.

No. 8. The Good Shepherd bearing upon his shoulders the lost lamb: as he seems to the uninitiated eye; but on closer inspection, he becomes the double-headed Anubis, having one head human, the other a jackal's, whilst his girdle assumes the form of a serpent rearing aloft its crested head. In his hand is a long hooked staff. This figure had without doubt two meanings: one obvious, for the vulgar; the other mystic and recognisable by the initiated alone. It was perhaps the signet of some chief teacher or apostle among the Gnostics; and its impression one of the tokens serving for mutual recognition mentioned by Epiphanius. Neatly engraved in a beautiful red sard fashioned to an octagon form; a shape without a pattern in the class of antique gems, though so much affected in mediæval art, on account of its supposed mystic virtues. (Author's Collection.)

No. 9. Crested Serpent, with erected head, and his coils supported upon two human legs, forming a walking figure. In the field a long legend, of which only the word ABPA is to be made out. Of this type I have seen no other example; its design recalls to one's mind the description of the Zoroastrian Dev *Ashmog*, "the two-footed serpent of lies." It is not unlikely that certain monstrous Egyptian gods may have served their iconoclastic

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Persian masters as types for the demons of their own mythology: just as subsequently the unlucky Pan and his satyrs became the devils of the monkish creed. Coarsely cut on loadstone.

No. 10. A Mithraic composition, possessing much elegance: two birds, ostriches, having one a bull's, the other a ram's head, stand as guardians of the Sacred Table (Eucharistic), which supports a tripod bearing the consecrated bread, above which, between two unknown letters, stands conspicuously the Delphic **E.** One of these characters is indeed identical with the Boethian numeral[1] for 3, the other a small cube placed upon a larger one. Above shine the seven planets: under the table reposes the Mithraic Lion, type of the sun, and likewise representing the highest grade in that religious hierarchy. Sard.

No. 11. Man with the head of a lion, standing, a long staff in one hand, the other raised with a threatening gesture; evidently a Leonticus, or high Mithraic official.[2] *Rev.* **KENTAYP E · EΘY · EKATON · TOMAXE**; perhaps the threat expressed by the figure's gesture, viz., "to cut the Centaur (Night-mare) into a hundred pieces;" if he presume to molest the wearer of the talisman. Green Jasper.

Plate II.

No. 1. Male figure mounted on a lion bestriding a corpse; overhead the Sun and Moon in conjunction: a female kneeling adores the apparition of the deity. In the field many scattered letters, amongst which may be read **NTA · YXYN**; words often found in these invocations. A Mithraic scene, belonging to "the rites wherein an apparent human sacrifice was perpetrated." The simulation of death by the neophyte was in fact the obvious preliminary to his being born again by the rite of baptism, which likewise formed an essential part of the Mithraic initiation, to the great scandal of the Christian Fathers. Loadstone: very rude work. *Rev.* **IAΩ · CABAΩΘ · AEHIOYΩ.** "Glory be

[1] See Plate XIII. G.

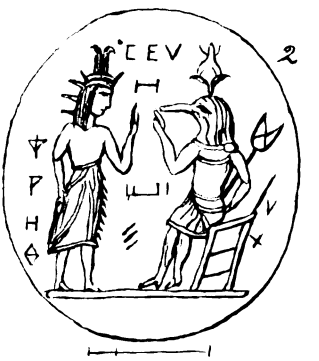
[2] Or perhaps Jerome's Pater Bromius; for how could the "Roarer" be better imaged? And if this be admitted, it will complete the number of equivalents for the personages enumerated in the Cave (p. 54).

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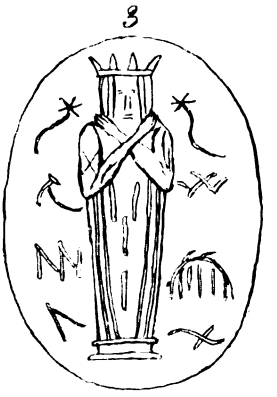
Plate II



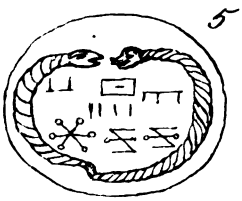
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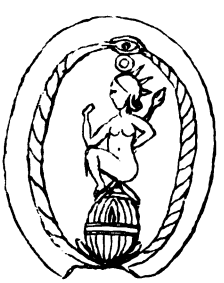
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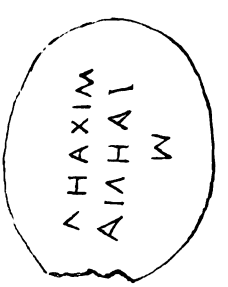


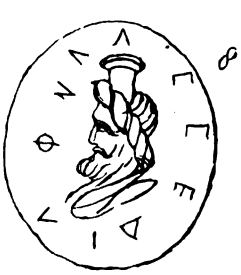












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to Iao!" the normal Basilidan invocation; showing how the notion of Iao, as the solar god, was common to the two religions, the later Egyptian and the Mithraic.

No. 2. Ibis-headed god holding the caduceus, and seated on a throne (Thoth or Hermes), and saluted by a standing deity with radiated and plumed head, whose name, *Phre* (Phœbus), is written behind him in a vertical line, exactly as the letters would have stood if expressed in hieroglyphics. This is the reason for such a disposition of the letters forming a name in so many later Egyptian amulets. In the field certain mystic characters, or perhaps numerals. *Rev.* the address uttered by Phre, ΑΒΛΑΘΑΝΑΒΛΑ ("Thou art our Father!"). The design of this scene belongs purely to the primitive Egyptian religion, but is here adopted by Gnosticism. Loadstone: a fair intaglio.

No. 3. Terminal figure; the head radiated, and the hands crossed upon the breast: on each side of the head is a comet; many inexplicable symbols in the field. It is usual to call this type (a very common one) *Osiris*, but there is nothing Egyptian in its attitude nor in the work of the intaglio. It seems to me rather a mediæval (Arabic or Jewish) representation of Jehovah. Such indeed may have been the figure of the Old Man, whose worship is so strongly insisted on in the articles of accusation brought against the Templars. The reverse is covered with flowery cyphers, much in the taste of Arabic calligraphy, and bearing not the least analogy to the ornamentation, or to the magical devices in use under the Lower Empire. Green Jasper.

No. 4. A god standing, a nude figure, with the mantle hanging down from one shoulder, and bearing the bay-branch of Apollo. He holds forth his hand in a caressing attitude towards a large fowl, with vulture-like beak, crowned with the modius of Serapis, and bearing the caduceus of Thoth. This bird, clearly not the usual Ibis, may be intended for the Phœnix.[1] In the field, **OMBO-PYN.** The last word in Hebrew means "Raven" (Apollo's own), and may possibly refer to the bird here depicted. This intaglio is very deeply but rudely cut in Schist.

[1] This peculiar bird of the Sun, which only made its appearance at Heliopolis, would be appropriately introduced in company with Phœbus, for whom the deity here seems intended.

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No. 5. Two serpents forming a cartouche, exactly like that placed by the Hindoos above the head of Ganesa, god of wisdom, to contain the Ineffable Name. The one here given incloses sundry symbols, regular masons' marks, and others seemingly hieroglyphic numerals. (See Pl. XIII. F. G.) Sard originally set in an iron ring.

No. 6. A design copied from the "Altar of Lugdunum," that so common type of the brass coins of Tiberius, but here modified in a Jewish sense to represent the Ark of the Covenant. On the front is placed, mis-spelt, the holy word *Tetragrammaton;* or the four Hebrew characters making up the name Jehovah, that spell so potent against all demons. An important inscription, on account of its taking the place of the name Iao, usually employed for this purpose, and thus showing that the one passed as equivalent for the other. Sard, the engraving in the latest and most debased Roman style; the only one of the class known to me in which the legend is written in the Latin character.

No. 7. Harpocrates seated upon an erect scarabeus: a serpent with his tail in his mouth, the emblem of eternity, encircles the design, exactly as in Hindoo work it forms the frame inclosing the *Ineffable Name. Rev.* ΜΙΧΑΗΛ - ΜΙCΑΗΛ - ΙΑΩ. These names of angels are of the same date as the intaglio, an early one for this class; well and deeply cut in a Black Jasper.

No. 8. Bust of Serapis, singular only from the legend around it, ΦΥΛΑCCΕ ΔΙΑ, "Take care of Jupiter," *i.e.* protect the benign influence of that planet against any baneful interference on the part of a malign star. That Jupiter was especially a good and protecting star appears from Horace's

> "———— Te *Jovis* impio
> *Tutela* Saturno refulgens
> Eripuit, celerique Fato
> Tardavit alas."

And again where Persius declares,

> "Saturnumque gravem nostro Jove fregimus una."

For in this later mythology Serapis was the sole and almighty god; hence his power to defend Jupiter, now reduced to a mere planetary genius, against any malignant influence.

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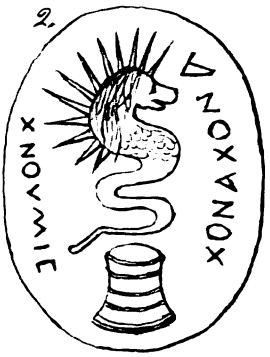
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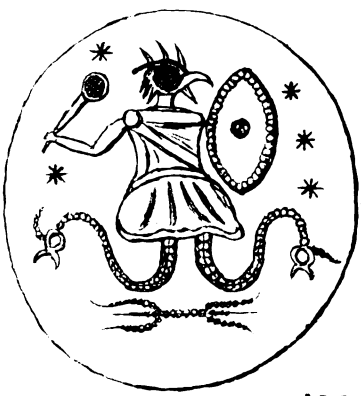


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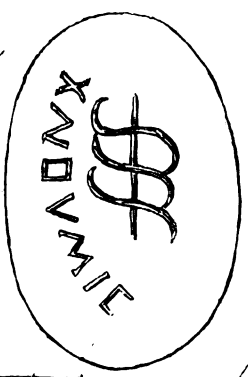
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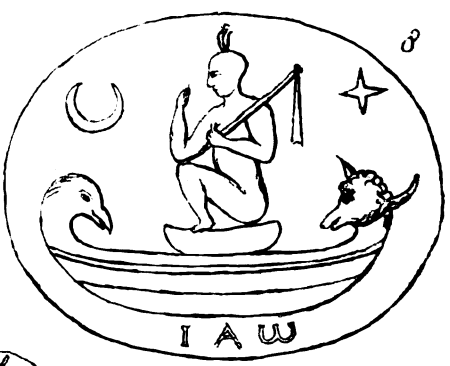
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It must have been out of their accustomed hatred for the notions of the Greeks that the Talmudists, with characteristic perverseness, made Saturn a good genius, and the legislator of their nation, whilst Jupiter, malignant and restless, they appointed for patron of the Christians (p. 53). Bloodstone: rude work.

Plate III.

No. 1. Mummy-like figure encompassed within the coils of a huge serpent; exactly as those in the leaden scrolls figured by Matter, deposited in the sarcophagi lately discovered in the Vigna Massini (p. 149). In the field several letters, apparently the word **INITIA** purposely dislocated. *Rev.* **IAΩ - INATIT,** in which the usual **ITA** will be detected; and on the bevelled edge the same combination of letters that is seen round the figure. Perhaps a ticket given to the neophyte on his initiation, or else a charm to secure his peace in the grave, and representing the corpse as wrapped in the protecting embrace of the Agathodæmon, the sacred serpent. Loadstone.

No. 2. The Chnuphis, lion-headed and maned Serpent, his head crowned with *twelve* rays, allusive to the number of the months, he being a solar emblem. He rises erect from a cylindrical cista, or perhaps low altar. Here we have the sigil the "Serpent with head radiated," prescribed by King Nechepsos (p. 74) to be engraved on a green Jasper, and worn about the neck to protect against all diseases of the chest. Galen ascribes the effect to the virtue of the stone itself, having found it equally efficacious if so worn without the engraving. The astronomer Hephæstion also notices that Chnumis is a star in the breast of Leo, and *therefore* his sigil is good for the human chest. Around the serpent runs the explanatory legend **ANOX - ANOX - XNOYMIC,** "I, I am the good genius." *Rev.* **NAYTITA** (ending as usual in **ITA**), the remains of a long inscription, unfortunately ground away in order to flatten the back of the stone, splintered by the fire that has entirely calcined the material: originally a Jasper, as the black hair-lines traversing its surface indicate. Work bold, though somewhat rude. (Author's Collection.)

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No. 3. Mars standing leaning on his spear, the point downwards (in sign of amity), the other hand on his shield.[1] In the field various indefinite signs, characters perhaps of some unknown language. Around runs the explanatory legend—**ΑΡΗΣ ΕΤΕΜΕΝ ΤΟΥ ΗΠΑΤΟΣ ΤΟΝ ΠΟΝΟΝ**, "Mars hath cut down the pain in the liver;"[2] showing this stone to have been designed for a charm against liver complaints: an unique example of the kind. *Rev.*—Various signs and letters, making out no definite word, in which the sacred **Ε** is often repeated. The intaglio, rude in the extreme, is shallow, and done by a very coarse tool. Loadstone, large size, and metallic in lustre.

No. 4. A disk of Green Jasper, which bears, neatly engraved, the spell—**ΜΕΤΑ ΤΟ ΟΝΟΜΑ ΤΟΥ ΜΟΝ ΘΕΟΥ**, probably intended for "In the name of the sole god."[3] Similar in nature to that figured by Caylus (Rec. iv., Pl. lvii. 4) **ΜΕΤΑ ΤΟ ΟΝΟΜΑ ΤΟΥ ΣΑΡΑΠΙC**, "In the name of Serapis," in white letters, which go through the black ground of a square paste, the ingenious production of some Alexandrian glass-worker, perforated for suspension. But this jasper intaglio was doubtless intended for stamping cakes or such like offerings;[4] or to render whatever it sealed up proof against the assaults of Demons. To the latter object served the application of Solomon's signet, so famous in Eastern legends.

No. 5. Abraxas brandishing a mace in a most pugnacious attitude, allusive to his title of "Beater of the Giants," who in this new theosophy had been metamorphosed into the agents of Matter, and the angels of the Demiurgus. The primal source of

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[1] τιθεμενος τα οπλα, as the Greek military term went: our "grounding arms."

[2] Caylus gives one bearing a long string of names, followed by παυσατε μοι τον πονον την φερουσην, "deliver for me from pain the wearer (a female)" (iv. Pl. 168).

[3] MON is put for MONOT, the OT in the second line doing duty twice. Serapis, in the invocations to him, arrogates to himself the title of the "one sole god," in which the influence of Alexandrian Judaism is unmistakeably to be recognised.

[4] I have lately met with a bronze disk which by reason of its large diameter and tenuity could only have been used for impressing some very yielding substance, such as dough. It presents engraved in slight intaglio the heads of Philip, his empress, and son, and the legend ΤΩΝ ΜΥCΤΩΝ ΒΡΙCΕΩΝ, "Belonging to the initiated in the town of Brise."

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these notions is incidentally pointed out by the weapon the god bears, the mace, unknown to the Greeks and Romans, but perpetually seen in the hands of Assyrian warriors.[1] Hence, later, the Persian king's life-guard were styled Μηλοφοροι, their mace being a metal ball on the end of a staff. *Rev.*—The Tri-formed goddess, a modification of the Hindoo Bhavani, brandishing in her several hands the proper attributes of the latter, serpents, torches, and swords, to scare away the demons combated by her consort Abraxas. Since the triple Hecate in one of her characters was the Moon,—

> "Terret, lustrat, agit, Proserpina, Luna, Diana,
> Ima, superna, feras, sceptro, fulgore, sagittis"—

we perceive a sufficient reason for her union here with Abraxas the Sun-god. Flat bronze disk, the design chiselled out in a rough yet spirited style, after the manner of a coin die. Perforated for suspension. The most singular monument that has come under my notice in this series.

No. 6. Legend on the rev. of fig. 5, Pl. I.

No. 7. The Chnuphis Serpent, with seven rays in his crown (the seven days of the week), standing erect. *Rev.*—The triple **SSS** and bar, the invariable reverse to the Chnuphis amulet against the pleurisy (p. 176): at the side **XNOVMIC**. Neatly cut in a fine opalescent calcedony, very convex on both sides. (Author's Collection.)

No. 8. Harpocrates seated in the lotus on the deck of the sacred boat (baris), the stem and stern of which terminate in the heads of a vulture and a bull, floating in mid air; overhead the sun and moon; in the exergue **IAΩ**. As the Egyptians called the Sun, before he attains his full power, Horus, there is good reason for giving the title *Iao* to this his infant representative. The same idea seems here expressed as in the Hindoo Naryan, "he that floateth on the waters" (hence the *Nereids*), always pictured as a child with his toe in his mouth, floating in his leaf-shaped boat on the tranquil bosom of the deep. Naryan

[1] Especially wielded by their *Sandon*, the original of the Greek Heracles, with his peculiar weapon, which in archaic art is often a real metal mace.

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is always painted *blue;* now since Heliodorus notices that the Egyptians gave the title of *Horus* occasionally to the Nile (the *blue* water), the analogy between the two infant deities becomes the more apparent. This intaglio formed the face of a ring cut out entirely in a hard green jasper mottled with yellow, bought by me in Rome (1849).

No. 9. The Cynocephalus, with the lunar disk on his head, standing, in the act of adoration, before a column engraved with letters, and supporting a triangle.[1] Here we see one of the pillars of Hermes, on which that god had engraved all knowledge. This beast was sacred to him, for the genuine species had an instinctive liking for pen and ink, says Horapollo (p. 44). The pillars of Hermes still survive in the Masonic insignia, but they have been Judaized into Solomon's Jachin and Boaz (Herz).

No. 10. The Cynocephalus crowned as before, and in the same attitude, adoring the first appearance of the new moon. *Rev.*—The legend **HNAMEPΩ**, which usually accompanies this type, but has not been interpreted. Yellow jasper. (Author's Collection.)

No. 11. The Gnostic Pleroma, or combination of all the Æons; expressed by the outline of a man holding[2] a scroll, or perhaps serpent, and filled in with innumerable letters, in which the name only of Iao may be recognized. The left hand is formed like *three bent spikes or nails;* unmistakeably the same symbol that Belus often holds in his extended hand on the Babylonian cylinders, afterwards discovered by the Jewish Cabalists in the points of the letter *Shin*, and by the mediæval mystics in the Three Nails of the Cross. Perhaps, after all, these nails held by Belus expressed no more than a notion of fixedness and unchangeableness, as in the Hebrew simile, "like

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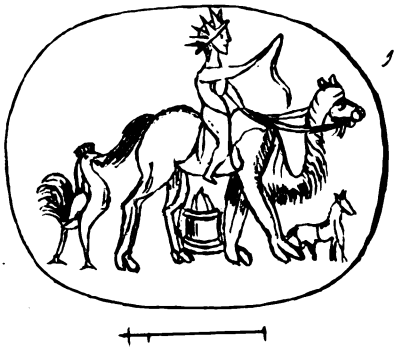
[1] The symbol of Deus Lunus.

[2] The most complete example of this type that I know of is engraved by Caylus (vi., pl. 22). The figure, the "Seir-Anpin" of the Kabala, is in front face; and in the exergue is ABΛΑΘΑΝΑΒΛΑ, leaving no doubt as to the Power thus personified. The reverse of the stone, a white sapphire much calcined, is the Mithraic Lion passant, which however Caylus thinks of an earlier date.

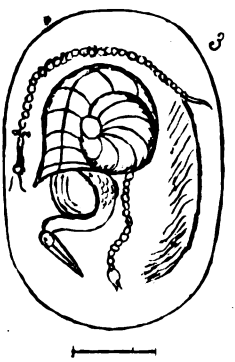
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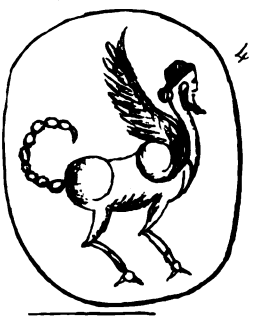
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Plate IV


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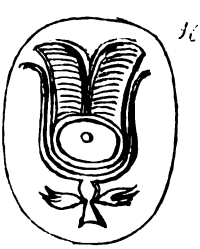

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a nail in a sure place," and therefore given by Horace to Fate in the same sense :—

> " Te semper anteit sæva Necessitas
> *Clavas trabales* et cuneos manu
> Gestans ahenâ."

This intaglio is very faintly engraved by a fine wheel (Herz : a cast).

Plate IV.

1. The East, or Oriens, personified by Sol with radiated head, mounted on a camel preceded by a horse, his peculiar sacrifice, according to the Magian religion ; as Ovid says :—

> " Placat equo Persis radiis Hyperiona cinctum,"

and followed by a cock, his attribute in Greece. Under the camel a burning altar.[1] This subject is not, strictly speaking, Gnostic, but rather connected with the Mithraica. Fair work. Calcedony.

2. Lion passant, beneath a flying scarabeus, in the field above Punic characters reading *Lanso*, a title accompanying the same type on a stone in the Paris Cabinet. An early Phœnician amulet, displaying the proper vehicle of Belus the Sun-god, and therefore cognate in idea to the preceding. A scarabeoid perforated through the axis. Calcedony streaked with red.

3. Ibis emerging from a nautilus-shell, and pouncing upon a serpent; around the design is bent an *aspergillum* or holy-water sprinkle. Amulet connected with the worship of Isis. Fine Sard.

4. Persian andro-sphinx, with bird's or locust's legs, and scorpion's tail; a Magian genius. Better work than is usual in this class.[2] Scarabeoid. Sard.

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[1] Or pyræa, with the sacred fire.

[2] Some such Persian demon St. John must have had in view in his description of the locusts coming out of the smoke of the bottomless pit. (Apoc. ix. 7.) " Their shapes were like unto horses prepared unto battle; their faces were the faces of men, the sound of their wings as the sound of chariots of many horses, and they had tails like unto scorpions, and they had stings in their tails." His Four

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5. Bacchic Vase; the belly formed out of three masks springing, on stalks, out of the base. The handle tipping the lid forms a distinct cross. This is a vessel belonging to the Bacchic mysteries, and of the same date as the earlier Gnostic stones. Red Jasper. (Author's Collection.)

6. A *Mobed* or Magian priest worshipping at an altar which supports a candelabrum, with the sacred fire and other emblems afterwards adopted by the Eastern Gnosis; on which account this piece, though of much earlier date, is introduced for comparison. In the field the lunar crescent. Cone. Calcedony.

7. A Gryllus; a Bearded Head covered with a helmet, formed out of two doves pecking at a fig, or his ear, and having for neck-piece a wolf's head. An amulet which combines for the protection of the wearer the attributes of Venus and Mars. In the field various cyphers, or detached letters, not now to be understood, but which confirm the supposition that the device was intended as a charm, not as a mere jeu d'esprit. Sard (formerly in the Author's Collection).

8. Female with radiated crown, seated on a throne, and holding out a scroll. In front the legend KVNHXVΣ, which, variously spelt, is often seen on these gems. Work extremely rude. Green Jasper.

9, Fantastic Bird, where the *motive* is a Persian king's head crowned by a tiara ending in a bird's;[1] in the field a serpent which makes the bird's tail. Apparently a Mithraic amulet. Antique Paste.

10. The double plume enclosing the solar disk, the more especial ornament of Isis. Raspe figures the same device, Pl. ii. 332, where it rests upon wheat ears. The object below it, in our example, is somewhat indefinite, but may mean two stalks of wheat. Cut on the base of a scarabeus beautifully worked in the finest sard, on the back engraved with a palm-branch and caduceus. A Greco-Egyptian work, probably the signet of some princess belonging to the Ptolemaic line. This gem is not

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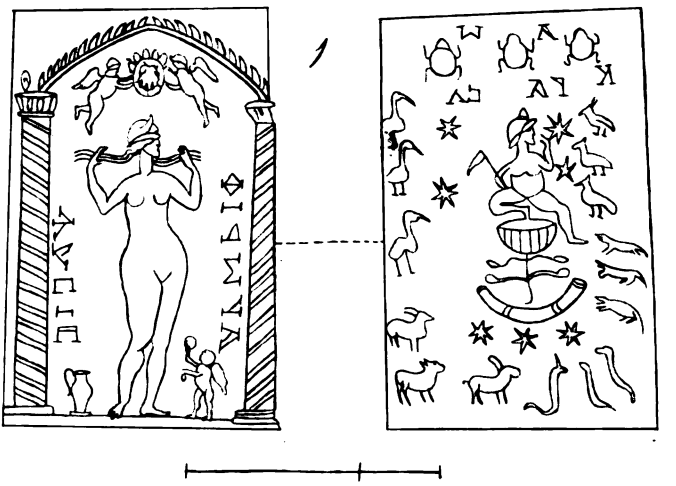
Beasts are identical with the Hindoo *Vehans*, or agents of the Divine will (p. 165): subsequently each is assigned to an evangelist.

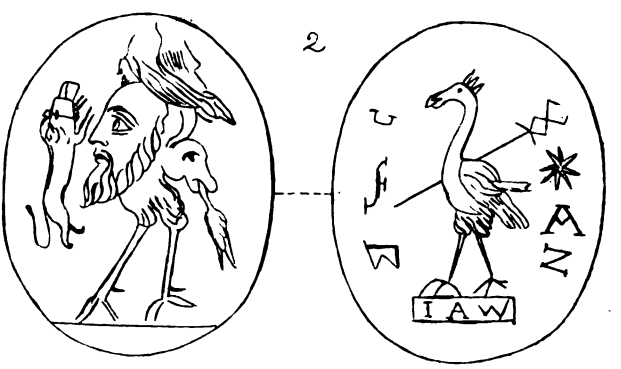
[1] Such as Varahran wears on his coins.

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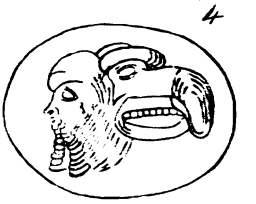
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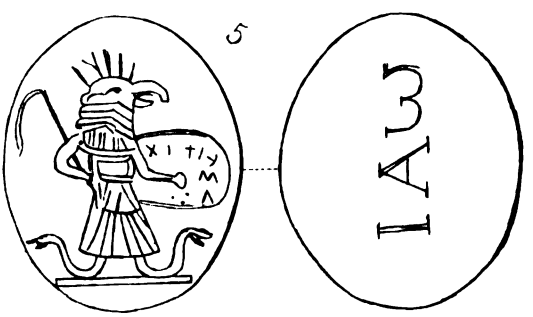
Plate V

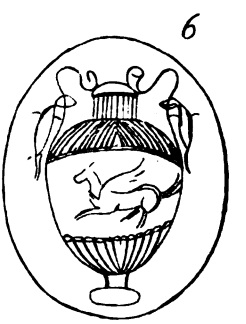




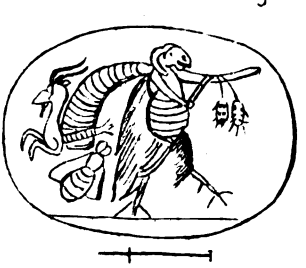


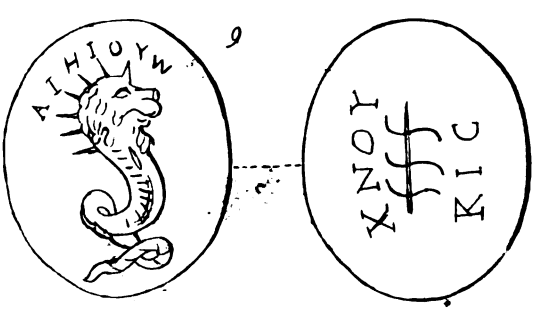












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figured here for any connection it had with Gnostic ideas, but from its displaying a union of Egyptian and Greek symbolism, and also on account of the extreme rarity of Egyptian intagli in fine or hard stones.

11. Elephant crawling out of a snail shell; in the field **C. F.** Such combinations, introducing the elephant, have been interpreted as charms against the disease taking its name from that animal. Probably here nothing more than a joke is intended, the Greek σχημα εξ απροσδοκητου, in thus uniting the mightiest with the most fragile of created things; a mode of raising a laugh, so frequent with Aristophanes. Fine work in a beautiful Sard. (Author's Collection.)

Plate V.

1. Venus standing under a canopy supported on twisted columns, arranging her hair before a mirror held up by a Cupid; two others hover, bearing up a wreath, above her head. In the field **ΦΑΣΙΣ · ΑΡΙΩΡΙΦ**, "the manifestation of Arioriph." Venus here stands for the personification of the Gnostic *Sophia* or Achamoth;[1] and as such is the undoubted source of our conventional representation of Truth.[2] *Rev.*—Harpocrates seated upon the lotus, springing from a double lamp, formed of two phalli united at the base. Above his head his title *Abraxas*, and over that the name Iao. In the field the seven planets. The sacred animals, the scarab, ibis, asp, goat, crocodile, vulture, emblems of as many deities,[3] the principal in the Egyptian mythology, arranged by *threes*, form a frame to the design. Neatly engraved on a large bright Loadstone.

2. Fantastic Bird, in which the mask forming the breast is evidently Plato's portrait; in the field a lion. The bird's head

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[1] It was under this form that the Supreme Tetrad brought down Truth from heaven to display her beauty to Marcus, as he describes in his Revelation (see p. 39).

[2] Mont. Pl. clxi. Venus unveiling herself has for reverse ΑΡϖΡΙ ΟΡΑϹ ΙϹ, "the vision of Arori," evidently the same in purport as this "Manifestation of Arioriph." His next a nude Venus, in the actual attitude of ours, reads ΑΡΡϖΡΙΦ ΙΑϹ ΙϹ for ΦΑϹ ΙϹ, and in the field ϹΑΝΚΤΑ, probably the owner's name. Both are taken from Capello.

[3] Viz., Phre, Thoth, Isis, Mendes Bebys, Neith.

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and neck were composed by another mask now lost by the fracture of the stone. *Rev.*—Ibis crowned and bearing the caduceus of Thoth; in the field the sun, with scattered letters making up the word ABPACAΞ. On a tablet below is inscribed IAΩ; a singular instance of the application of these titles to such an emblem. For they properly belong to the solar divinity, whereas the Ibis is the acknowledged attribute of the lunar genius. This is the sole instance in my knowledge of a Gryllus bearing the indubitable stamp of Gnosticism; for both its sides, done in a bold coarse style, are certainly from the same hand. The stone too is Obsidian, a rarely used material, and peculiar to Egypt.

3. The signet of one T. Acilius Aglaus, a freedman of the noble family Acilia, and by birth a Greek, as his proper name declares. He was evidently a Christian of the primitive times, who took for his device the Fish (the Dag, or Messiah of the Talmudists), as recommended by Clemens Alexandrinus. Neatly engraved in a Nicolo.

4. Silenus-mask, conjoined with a vulture's head: an unique and early Gryllus: originally set in an iron ring. Red Jasper.

5. Abraxas advancing to the combat, armed with a scourge and an elliptical shield inscribed with letters forming no intelligible word. *Rev.*—IAΩ alone. A spirited engraving, on green Jasper.

6. An Isiac Vase: twined asps are the handles: on its belly is a Pegasus. Black Jasper.

7. A *Symbolum* in its primary sense: being a ticket only to be understood by the initiated. The device is a combination of letters and symbols including a crescent and the figure 8 (the latter an astrological mark). Sard of good quality.

8. Locust,[1] or rather a Mole-cricket (grillo), walking erect,

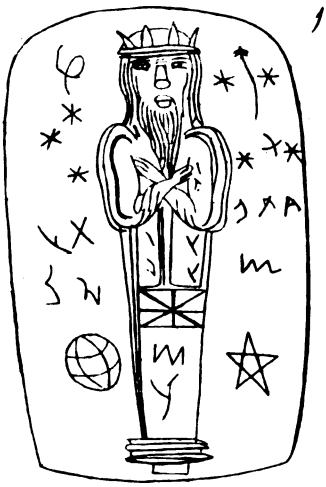
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[1] Perhaps a medical sigil: according to the "Doctrine of Signatures," that "similia similibus curantur," *i.e.*, the appearance of an object indicates the malady for which Nature has designed it for a remedy, the locust was employed in medicine for certain affections of the genitals. "Locustarum suffitu stranguriæ juvantur," was a notion in Pliny's time. A singular amulet illustrating this is figured by Caylus (Rec. vi. pl. 41)—a locust of the

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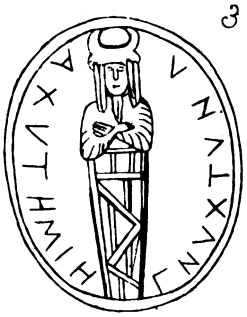
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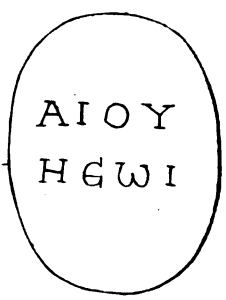


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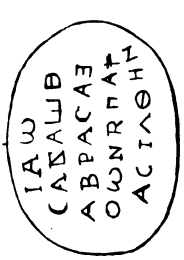
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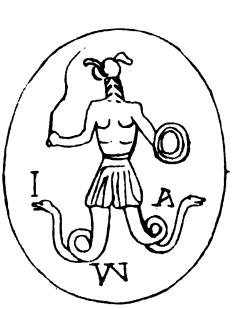
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and bearing on his shoulder a huge cornucopia, whence issue a Capricorn and a large bee. In his paw are two wheat-ears. This insect, from its resemblance to a skeleton (larva), and spectre-like habits and habitation, was accounted a powerful charm against the evil eye. The introduction of Capricorn shows the design to have conveyed an astrological sense, now far beyond our detection. Excellent Roman work. Brown Sard (Author's Collection).

9. The Chnuphis Serpent raising himself aloft. Over, and corresponding to the rays of his crown, are the Seven Vowels, the elements of the *Word*. *Rev.*—The usual triple **SSS** and bar, and the name **XNOYBIC.** A beautiful intaglio on a pale-green plasma of the finest quality: extremely convex.

Plate VI.

1. Osiris, or the "Old Man," a terminal figure: at the foot the celestial globe and Masonic pentagon, or Solomon's Seal: the field occupied by symbols and letters seemingly Hebrew. The whole design is mediæval, and could hardly have been a production of even the lowest times of the Empire. This is one of the pieces most evidently bespeaking a Rosicrucian origin. Deeply cut in a coarse-grained Green Jasper.

2. Fortuna standing between two youths bearing palms; in the field above another palm-branch, and the dispersed letters making up the word **FECI.** This legend announces the attainment of some desired end, an idea also conveyed by the palm-branches; and perhaps is used here in a mystic sense to denote the completion of the trials required previous to admission into some secret corporation. Calcedony.

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natural size cut in agate, engraved on the base with the explanatory address to its influence.

ΑΚΡΙΣ ΕΧΕ ΠΟΙΡ ΤΙΣΙΚΡΑΤΟΥΣ. —"Locusta serva penem Tisicratis."

To explain the selection of this insect for such a purpose, it must be mentioned that the Greeks saw in its cylindrical, cambered, annulated body an analogy to the phallus; and hence its virtue as a *fascinum*, as its figure implied what the latter form actually represented. Hence Ecclesiastes' simile "the grasshopper shall be a burden," alluding to the loss of virile power consequent on old age.

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3. Athor, her head crowned with a disk between two cow's horns; a terminal figure corresponding to the Osiris already described, and engraved in the same peculiar style. Legend **AXYTHMIHΓNYΞTYNA**: the first part of which seems to envelope the name *Achamoth*, Wisdom. A coarse-grained Green Jasper.

4. Terminal figure, or a Latin Cross topped by a human head. This cross seems to be the Egyptian Tau,[1] that most ancient symbol of the generative power, and therefore transferred into the Bacchic mysteries. Such a Tau is found on the wall of a house at Pompeii in juxtaposition with the phallus, both symbols embodying the same idea. At the base **NIXAPO ΠΛHC.** The same legend occurs at the foot of a cross-shaped trophy, above which is the Christian **X**,[2] on a stone in the French Collection, No. 2222. Around the design runs a long legend, consisting of many vowels intermixed with a few consonants, evidently designed to shroud in mystery from profane eyes some Holy Name therein concealed. *Rev.*—The Seven Vowels, though not in their proper order. This is most beautifully cut on a fine double-convex Calcedony elegantly mounted in an Oriental gold frame, whence hangs a pearl: intended for a pendant.[3]

5. Sol in his quadriga above, Luna in her biga below, traversing the star-spangled heavens: as Manilius sings—

"Quadrijugis et Phœbus equis et Delia bigis."

Rev.—**IAΩ CABAΩΘ ABPACAΞ O ΩN ΠAP ACTAΦHN**: "Glory be to Iao, the Holy Name, he that is by the side of Astaphe."[4] In the last name we recognise *Astaphai*, the

[1] In the demolition of the Serapeum this cross was discovered cut upon the stones of the adytum, placed there, said those skilled in hieroglyphics, as the symbol of eternal life: a discovery affording great matter of triumph to Sozomen, who takes for granted it had been hallowed there in a spirit of prophecy.

[2] And again written, with a variation, on the Mithraic stone described in the next page.

[3] The same legend, but written NEIXAPOΠAHC . IWA, occupies the reverse of a gem (feuerstein) figured in the Göttingische Antiker, Nos. 35 *a* and *b*, of which the obverse is indubitably Mithraic; for it represents the lion-headed, serpent-encircled man, a torch in one hand, a sword, serpent, wreath, in the other, soaring aloft from the back of a lion under whom lies a prostrate corpse.

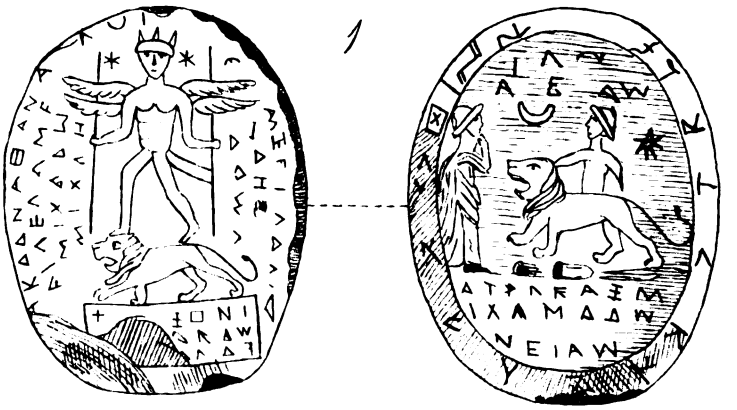
[4] Such is the classical force of the

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Plate VII

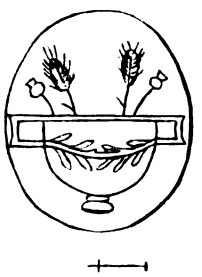
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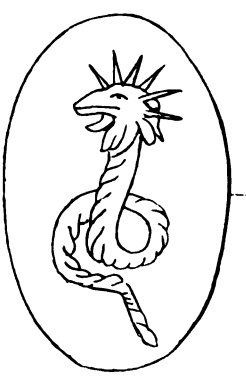
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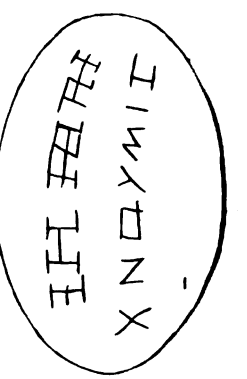


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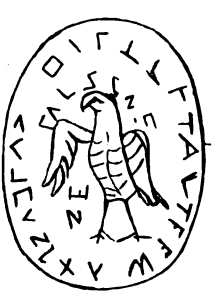


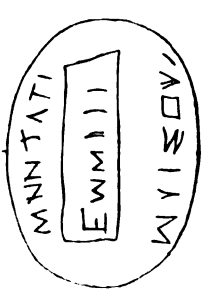
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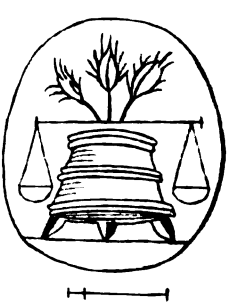


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Jewish Angel of the planet Mercury: and inasmuch as in the Hindoo system that star is called Buddha, this invocation furnishes additional evidence as to the true source of all these notions. This design also supplies an example of the gems engraved with the names of the Sun and Moon, prescribed by the Magi, and ridiculed by Pliny (xxxvii. 21). Neatly cut in a bloodstone, the antique Heliotropium: a stone in itself of wondrous magic power, and even capable of making its bearer invisible:[1] "quibusdam additis præcantationibus."[2]

6. Horse-Chimera, presenting no other novelty than the erect dolphin in front, from whose tail springs a palm, on which the horse is browsing. Both animals being attributes of Neptune, the talisman was designed to secure his good graces. Brown Sard.

7. Mounted warrior, transfixing with his spear a prostrate enemy: a design executed in the manner of the later Sassanian stamps. *Rev.*—**CΦPAΓIC,** "The Seal of God;" the Sigil's power being to make its owner victorious. Perhaps the very "seal" to be exhibited by the ascending soul to each astral Power: see p. 127. Loadstone.

8. Iao flourishing his scourge: in the field **IAω**. *Rev.*—**CABAωΘ**. Green Jasper.

Plate VII.

1. A four-winged genius, with radiated head,[3] holding a long sceptre in each hand, standing upon a lion's back; and hence he may be understood as the chief Decanus of the Sign Leo. Beneath is a tablet containing an unintelligible legend, partially

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preposition; but probably here it means "contrary to," and then Iao would be invoked to protect the soul against that malignant son of Ildabaoth.

[1] Pliny especially notices that the Magi used it in the observation of solar eclipses: "Speculi modo Solem accipit deprehenditque defectus *subeuntem* Lunam ostendens," a property to which the subject here engraved corresponds.

[2] Of such spells the legend on our reverse may be a specimen.

[3] There is a star on each side, which seems to define its astrological character. The idea of the figure seems borrowed from the ancient Assyrian Belus, standing upon his lion, or *vehan*, according to the Hindoo doctrine.

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defaced. In the field, dispersed, a long formula, in which may be detected the words ΑΝΑΘΑΝΑΒΑΑ ΕΙΑΑΜ ΜΙΧΑΑΩ[1] ΜΙΧΑΗΑ, showing the light in which the genius here figured was invoked. *Rev.*—A god guiding a lion, and adored by a kneeling female, *i. e.* the soul of the owner of the talisman: a type proving it to belong to the Mithraic class, like that already noticed (Pl. II. 1), but with the omission of the corpse. Of the long formula filling up the field, though clearly enough engraved, no distinct words can be recognised, except ΙΑΩ CABAΩ above: in the exergue it seems intended for ΑΚΡΑ ΣΑΞ · ΜΙΧΑΜ · ΑΔΩΝΕ · ΙΑΩ. Loadstone.

2. Eagle standing upon a tablet: a design exemplifying Pliny's notice of the supposed virtues of such a sigil if engraved upon an emerald, for which unattainable gem this green jasper was no doubt intended as a substitute. The long and unintelligible legend around may also be the "precatio addita" which empowered the talisman to keep off hail-storms and flights of locusts.[2] In the astrology of the Hindoos the eagle is the *Vehan*, *i. e.* vehicle on which rides Buddha or the planet Mercury. The introduction of the bird on talismans seems to be connected with some such idea.

3. Two-handled vase, containing two wheat-ears with two poppy-heads, and pertaining to the mysteries of Ceres. Poppy-heads ever accompany the proper gifts of the goddess,[3] for the Romans used the seed in their cakes as we do caraways. Sard.

4. Iao flourishing his whip, and holding a bow, an unusual attribute for this god, but still an Oriental one. Over his head ΙΑΩ; beneath, ΑΒΡΑCΑΖ. *Rev.*—Horus seated on the lotus: on the bevelled edge of the stone CЄMЄC ЄΙΑΑΜ, "The Eternal Sun": an address explained by Macrobius's statement, that *Horus* was but a name of the Sun at a particular period of his course. Green Jasper.

5. A double-headed Capricorn with an owl's body, standing

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[1] Or ΝΙΧΑΡω ΠΑΗC divided: ΑΔωΝΑΙ.

[2] The inscription within the tablet is clearly ΡΙΜΕ; and the legend itself concludes with ΕΡΟΕΜΙΝΑ—words new to me.

[3] Hence Virgil's "vescum papaver."

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upon and holding in his fore-foot a rudder; in allusion to the doctrine laid down by Manilius that the star in this Sign's tail is the proper horoscope of mariners and pilots. Or it may typify the fickle temper marking the native under the Sign generally: as Manilius has it (iv. 256):—

> "Quin et mobilitas rerum mutataque sæpe
> Mens natat."

This Sign likewise presided over all the space within tide-mark, the alternate domain of sea and land: a dominion expressed by the half-terrestrial, half-marine composition of the figure. The region peculiarly under him was the west of Europe (iv. 791):

> "Tu Capricorne regis quidquid sub sole cadenti
> Est positum."

Hence Horace styles him—

> ——————"Tyrannus
> Hesperiæ Capricornus undæ."

The owl's body is given him here, perhaps, as the attribute of Pallas, the designer of that prototype of navigation, the Argo. (From a cast in the Impronte Gemmarie.)

6. The Chnuphis Serpent. *Rev.*—The Seven Vowels in a novel arrangement, viz. **IH EA HI**[1]**—XNOYMIC.** Rudely cut: Calcedony.

7. Another Eagle: an amulet belonging to the same class as No. 2: a long formula on both sides of the stone, which, however, does not produce any definite words, except that perhaps on the reverse the name **TATI** for Thoth may be intended.[2] Green Jasper.

8. The Modius, or Corn-measure, out of which spring three wheat-stalks, and on which rests the Balance: the horoscope of arithmeticians and legislators. The Chelæ, Scorpio's claws, which hold the Balance in the Zodiac, says Manilius (iv. 204)—

> "Mensuræ tribuunt usus et pondera rerum."

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[1] ϒ and ω have been omitted by the careless talisman-maker.

[2] The reading seems to be ΛOCIAM —MAN TATI. Tat is Sanscrit for Virtue.

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This gem, consequently, may have been the seal of some edile or *agaronomus*. Sard.

Plate VIII.

1. The Mithraic Lion, passant: in the field two stars. The reverse presents the most complete assemblage of Gnostic symbols anywhere to be found united upon the same monument. Of these, many are regular Masons' Marks, as will be observed on referring to those given in Pl. XI. 5: others are the same characters as occur in the Thugga Inscription, and, like those, modifications seemingly of the Egyptian Demotic alphabet.[1] These symbols are very carefully engraved; not so the lion, a rude and barbarous intaglio. Sard, the actual size.

2. Father Nilus reclined, and holding up the peculiar double lamp already noticed, supporting the lotus of Horus (Plate V. 1): which corroborates Heliodorus's statement as to the application of this god's name to the river. He further notices that the numerical value of the letters in the name ΝΕΙΛΟΣ makes up the sum of 365. Hence the same result is deducible from this calculation as in the case of the names Abrasax and Mithras. *Rev.*—Horus seated on the lotus: the legend imperfect, but evidently once ΙΑΩ ΑΒΡΑCΑΖ. Now, Horus being the Sun, these titles properly belong to him, though generally applied to the compound deity of Basilides. Green Jasper.

3. Anubis walking, in his hands the sceptre and Nile-vase. *Rev.*—A formula, of which only the opening ΚΑΤΑΛ . . . can be decyphered, so faint and confused are the letters. It is probably the same, judging from its commencement, with Raspe's No. 1485 on the reverse of a Serapis-head.

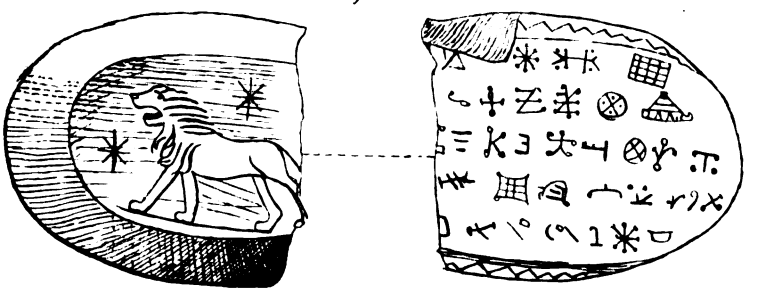
.ΑΛΛΤΑΚ
ΑϘΑΥΞΛΛΑΒ
ΙϘΑΧΑΜΜ
ΘΩΤΝΑ[2] Green Jasper.

[1] Some again are so like the Caste-Marks still in use, that it is hardly possible to believe the coincidence purely accidental. I have already given Bellermann's ingenious (though untenable) explanation that they are the sacred divining-lots—figures formed by the accidental juxtaposition of little sticks and balls.

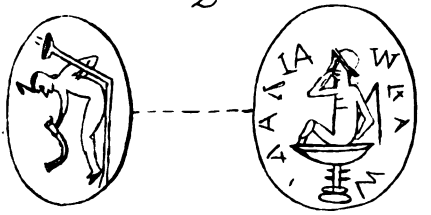
[2] Seemingly enshrouding the love-spell, "Subdue Laura Macaria."

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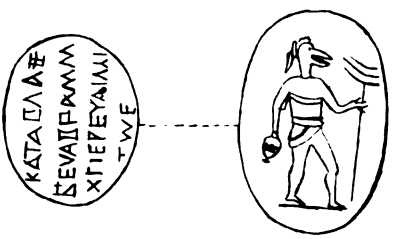
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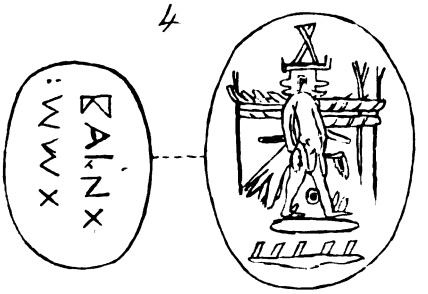
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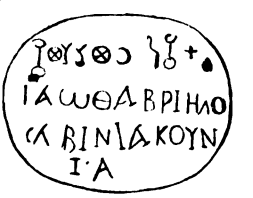
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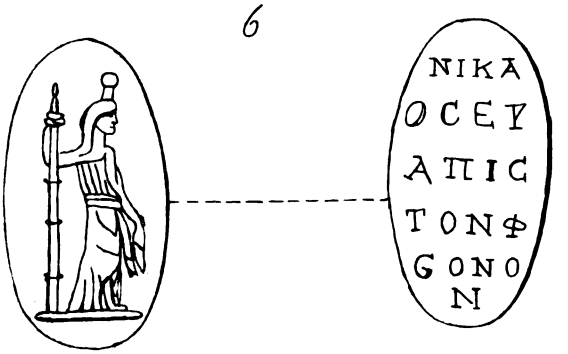
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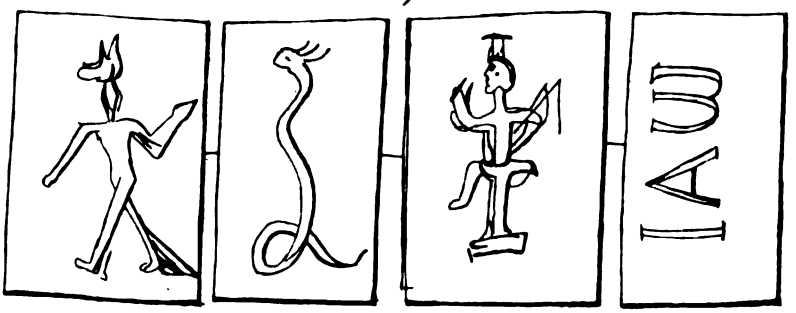
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Plate IX

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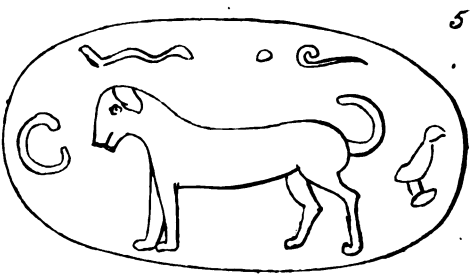
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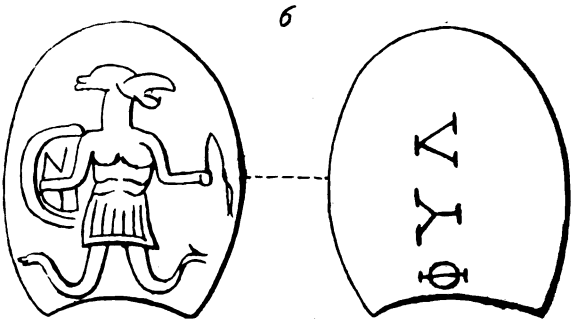
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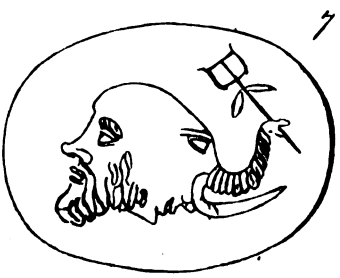
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4. The four-winged astral genius[1] as before, but supporting upon his head the crossed sticks commonly seen placed on the Magian fire-altar.[2] He stands on a line, under which is a rod having *five* projecting branches lopped off close. *Rev.*—ΒΑΙΝΧΩ, "a Prize," making it appear that this was the badge of some *adept*. Loadstone.

5. A line of neatly cut symbols, followed by an invocation to ΙΑΩ · ΘΑΒΡΙΗΛ, (*sic*) seemingly the angel Gabriel, to protect Sabinia Quinta, the wearer of this talisman.[3] Loadstone.

6. Goddess standing, and leaning on a tall flambeau: possibly Proserpine,[4] who, under the singular title of *Abracura*, appears as the consort of *Dispater* (Serapis) in the fresco of Vibia's tomb (p. 37). Hence the connexion of the subject with the prayer to Serapis on the other side, viz. ΝΙΚΑ Ο CΑΡΑΠΙC ΤΟΝ ΦΘΟΝΟΝ, "Baffle envy (the evil-eye), O Serapis!" An inscription expressly declaring the object of this talisman, and illustrating the true sense of many others couched in an unknown tongue (see 'Evil-Eye,' p. 113). Loadstone.

7. Virgo seated upon the conjoined bodies of Taurus and Capricorn: a Trine: being the nativity of the owner, and expressive of his love for justice; for the Virgin, Erigone, is the same as Astræa. Hence Pesc. Niger, in allusion to the surname of *Justus*, placed on his coinage the device of a terrestrial globe with these signs for supporters. Ant. Paste.

Plate IX.

1. An oblong cube of Steatite, having its four faces very rudely engraved with types belonging to the purely Alexandrian Gnosis. First face: Anubis holding some indistinct object in one hand, the other raised aloft in the attitude of command. Second face: the Agathodæmon serpent standing on his

[1] Perhaps the Phœnician *Taaut*.

[2] Or else the Greek X, in the sense of the Chrisma.

[3] Whenever the owners' names are to be discovered on these talismans, they almost always are feminine, a proof how popular these mystic notions were amongst the ladies of those times —especial patronesses of everything coming from Egypt.

[4] In Raspe's gem 1497, Proserpine is similarly figured, but armed also with a sword, standing at the side of Serapis on his throne.

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tail. Third face: Horus seated on the lotus-flower. Fourth face: the sacred name IAΩ in large letters. This last is peculiarly instructive, thus placed in intimate connexion with the deities of the ancient creed, and standing for the fourth and unrepresented god: the greatest of the whole. This cube is perforated for wear as a *periapt*. Found at Bonn in 1853, another instance of the wide dissemination of these notions.

2. Athor seated with her legs extended and raised (a posture adopted in the original figure to display as distinctly as possible the androgynous nature of this divinity). In one hand she grasps a lion, in the other a serpent, and rests upon a base supported by four diminutive human figures in various attitudes: a rough imitation of the bas-relief adorning the base of the actual idol. *Rev.*—Belus standing upon his lion passant; the type already and frequently noticed. This sard is said to have been found at Jerusalem, and is most singular as the only monument of the kind of so late a date, presenting so purely a Babylonian type as this representation of Athor: for the work of the intaglio is very peculiar, not that of primitive art, but that marking the lowest decline; neither is it in the bold, though heavy Sassanian style. It may indeed be mediæval: certainly Von Hammer, taking into account its reputed *provenance*, would have ascribed it without hesitation to the Templars, and have deduced curious mysteries from the attitude of the goddess (Pierotti).

3. Horus seated on the lotus-flower in his wonted attitude, but here equipped with the unusual attribute of a whip, and his head surrounded with rays, showing his identity in the present case with Sol. In the exergue a legend consisting of several lines in microscopic, elegant characters, but seemingly containing a formula differing from any yet noticed. The execution is far better than is customary in these works, but the intaglio has suffered considerably from wear. Loadstone.

4. Capricorn conjoined with Scorpio, and carrying on his shoulder a legionary standard. The reason for this unique combination seems to lie in the fact that the former sign was the distinctive badge of the Second Augustan Legion, whilst the latter was the *tutela* of Mars, as Manilius declares,

" —— pugnax Mavorti Scorpius hæret."

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The standard also so conspicuously introduced fixes the meaning of the device, and points it out for the signet of some officer in this legion, who thus places himself under the patronage at once of the tutelary sign, and of the god of war. It must be remembered that the standards were the deities of the army, and were, when not on a march, deposited in the *sacellum* of the camp, where sacrifice was regularly offered before them. Brown Sard. (Author's Collection.)

5. Large Dog passant; in the field a Raven, Serpent, and other indistinct emblems. This is apparently the Mithraic Dog, so highly reverenced by the Parsees (p. 60), an explanation borne out by the presence of the Raven, so frequent in the Mithraic monuments. Opaque white Calcedony.

6. Abraxas accoutred as usual. *Rev.*—The abbreviation ΦΥΛ for Φυλασσε, "Guard me," an invocation to be found expanded to a greater length in other instances (Pl. II. 8). Plasma: extremely minute, evidently intended for a lady's ring.

7. The Elephant-Chimera; in which the Silenus-mask is strikingly defined. A caduceus held in his trunk declares the influence of Hermes over the composition. This type, never varying in its design, occurs so frequently, that its meaning must have been obvious at the time, and its virtue universally acknowledged. It is generally explained as a charm against the disease (Indian in origin), the elephantiasis, though this explanation is purely a conjecture. Orpheus indeed promises to teach

> "———— how the pest to tame
> That from the elephant derives its name:"

but the verses containing the recipe are not extant: the tenor of the rest, however, shows that the remedy lay in the virtue of some specific stone. The elephant's head is a frequent device on the Greco-Bactrian coins, as well as on the Sassanian seals. The Hindoo god *Ganesa* is imaged elephant-headed, and our amulets may have reference to some corresponding power in the later Roman syncreticism.[1] *Ganesa*, as the god of wisdom and the

[1] Raspe gives (No. 8057) Cybele holding a banner, seated upon an elephant similarly carrying a caduceus, with a lion couchant for her foot-stool.

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sciences, is thus identical with the Occidental Hermes; hence the appropriateness of his peculiar attribute, the caduceus here so markedly introduced. Red Jasper. (Author's Collection.)

Plate X.

1. Anubis standing, holding in one hand a staff tipped with a cross, in the other his holy-water bucket or *Situla:* behind him stands a mummy-like object, whose head seems made up of erect tresses, or perhaps snakes; which appear more distinctly on Raspe's stone (Pl. VII. 32), where this identical figure shows a head made up of five erect asps. She is there seated holding on each hand a small baboon: she is also attended by two figures of Anubis exactly similar to ours, a proof that the same mystery is couched in both the designs. But Raspe's gem possesses the singular addition of a Punic legend above the head of the goddess. *Ballaji*, one of the avatars of Vishnu, wears a crown made up of seven erect asps. In our stone, under the figure is an open hand, displaying distinctly five fingers besides the thumb, allusive to the sacred number. Here again the Hindoo idea may be detected, for the Brahmins consider the open hand as equivalent to the *argha* or *yoni*, the expressive emblem of the passive power of Nature; and here it is introduced in the same sense as referring to Isis, in whose procession such a figure was carried (p. 109).[1] Next comes the globular Nile-vase, or Μητρικον, resting upon a low table. The *lotah*, or brass drinking-cup, often represented in the hands of the Hindoo gods, much resembles this in shape, and may have been its prototype. *Lotah* and lotus-flower (cup-shaped) are evidently analogous in derivation.

In the field, arranged vertically, as used in hieroglyphic writing, the formulæ **ANA ΘANABΛA** and **CEMEC ЄIΛAM**. A talisman of most unusual form, being a slender cylinder, thickest in the middle, and tapering off towards the ends, one

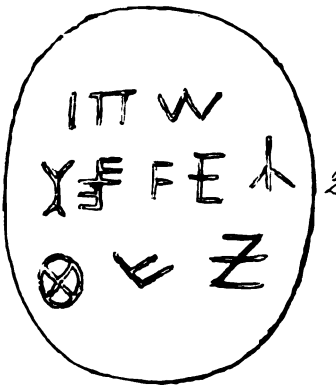
[1] The left hand interpreted as the emblem of Justice; it will be noticed that this hand also is the left. The interpretation was clearly nothing more than the popular one; the true was confined to the initiated.

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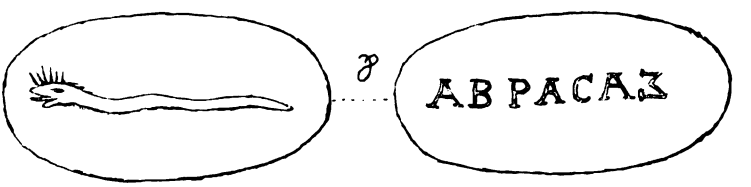
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finished in a boss, as if for tying a string[1] round. Well engraved. Plasma.

2. Legend in Greek letters, intermingled with other symbols exactly corresponding with certain Masons' Marks, and certainly of the same signification in their origin; compare Plate XI. 5. *Rev.*—A long formula crossing a double circle, copied in the text, p. 100. Green Jasper.

3. Serpent-legged Giant[2] defying Jupiter: an Italo-Grecian intaglio of the best period; merely introduced here to show the probable origin of the Abraxas figure, although in that figment of Basilides the signification is entirely changed, that god often taking the title of "Beater of the Giants." Burnt Sard. (Author's Collection.)

4. A Winged Genius riding upon and guiding a lion, *i. e.* the Sign Leo, for the seven stars surrounding him clearly indicate the astrological character of the design. Porphyry much corroded.

5. Gorgon's Head: below, the legend **ΑΡΗΓΩ ΡΩΡΟΜΑΝΔΑΡΗ**, "I protect Rhoromandares:" some Persian or Armenian, as his name attests. This singular inscription is most important, on account of its explaining the cause of the frequency of the *Gorgoneion* in personal decorations of every kind, being reputed the most efficacious of amulets. Red Jasper. (Author's Collection.)

6. Serapis enthroned; by his side the triple-headed monster, emblem of Time, the Past, Present, and Future (p. 65). Before him stands Isis, holding aloft the sistrum, in the other hand a bundle of wheat-ears. This group exactly represents the famous one at Alexandria, explained by Macrobius as the Earth receiving the genial influence of the Sun. Around runs the invocation **Η ΚΥΡΙΑ CICIC ΑΓΝΗ**, "Pure is our Lady Isis," where it will be observed her name is written *Sisis*, so as to read

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[1] It is in fact a complete spindle, and may have been used for twisting some magical yarn:—

"Necte tribus nodis ternos Amarylli colores
Necte Amarylli modo et Veneris dic vincula necto."

[2] Such a form was not necessarily confined to the Titans, for Boreas was figured with serpents for legs upon the coffer of Cypselus.

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indifferently both ways. Κυρια is the exact translation into Greek of the Sanscrit *Isi*, fem. of Isa, "Lord," and is intentionally employed here as the equivalent of her Egyptian name. The Serpent of Serapis had its origin in the huge Serpent *Sesha*, the Regent of Hell. In later times Serapis had usurped the place of the Grecian Esculapius, and the Serapeum was resorted to by the sick, who obtained his advice in dreams, as beforetimes they had in the Asclepeion, whither Aristophanes sends Plutus for the recovery of his sight. There was good reason for this exchange; the god of the shades was evidently the fittest patron *ex officio* of Medicine. Finely engraved in a beautiful Sard. (Author's Collection.)

7. Two Cupids in a boat, the one fishing, the other steering. Published here as an example of that rare class, purely Christian types; for the mast, with the yard, making a true Cross, forms a significant and conspicuous feature in the design. The type of the fisherman is amongst those recommended by Clemens for the signets of the faithful. A pretty intaglio in a Sard traversed by a white vein, of which the engraver has taken advantage to give more effect to his intended Cross. (Author's Collection.)

8. The Agathodæmon Serpent, here not erect, but crawling along at full length. *Rev.*—ABPACAZ; a legend most rare in connexion with this type. Calcedony, very brilliant, perhaps semi-opal.

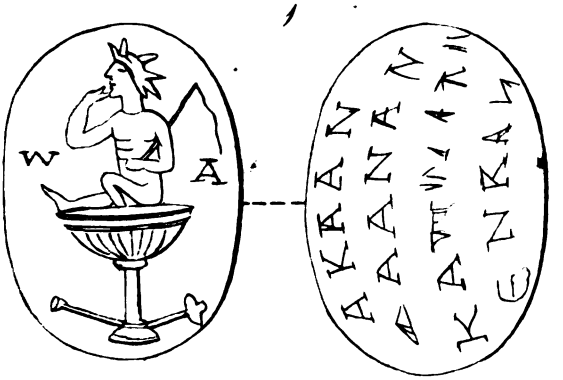
Plate XI.

1. Horus seated on the lotus-flower, from whose stalk spring two heads or seed-vessels; in the field IAΩ. *Reverse* covered with a formula in ill-cut indistinct letters, apparently beginning with ABAΘANABΛA. Green Jasper.

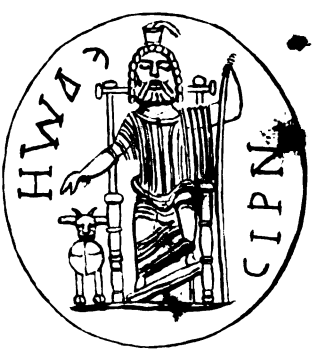
2. Serapis enthroned, seen in front, laying his hand upon his attendant the triple-headed monster. In the field ЄPMHCIPN, apparently an address to Hermes Psychopompus, the last three letters being the initials of the words in some well-known prayer. Here Hermes stands for Karmala, the servant of Yama, who conducts the good into his presence in a self-moving car. The choice of the stone almost invariably, as in this

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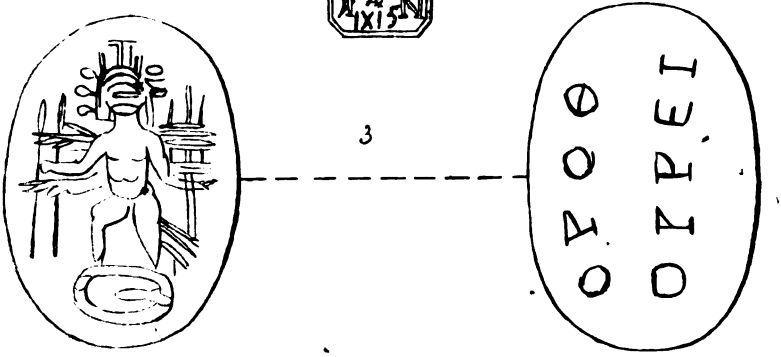
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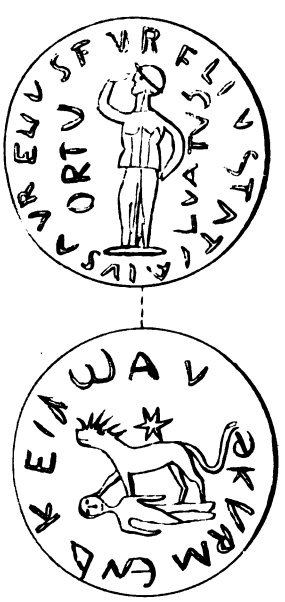
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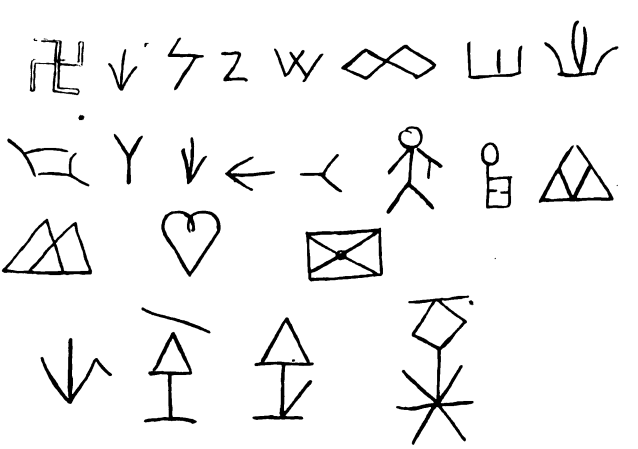
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MEDIÆVAL AND MODERN MASONS MARKS.

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instance, selected for the intagli of Serapis, viz. the Red Jasper or ancient Hæmachates, may have been dictated by the knowledge of the primary signification of the name, viz. *Sri-pa*, the "Blood-drinker" (p. 66). Or this inscription may be no more than the owner's name, perhaps the very surgeon alluded to by Martial,—

"Enterocelarum fertur Podalirius Hermes"—

followed by the titles of his diploma, I for ιατρος, the others not now to be made out. Serapis had by this time taken the place of Esculapius, and often appears with the symbol of the serpent-entwined club; an appropriate device, in another sense, for the signet of one who doubtless had professionally given to many their passport to the proper domains of Serapis, god of the lower world. (Author's Collection.)

3*a*. Dove with expanded wings, bearing on its head a cross; above it Θ P, below A T, in monogram, and N. At the bottom, in smaller letters, IXIↃ, perhaps implying the Saviour's name; whilst the larger capitals probably express MHTHP Θεου, "Mother of God;" the prominence given to which sufficiently marks the late period of this talisman, dating far down in the Byzantine period, when the worship of the Panagia had superseded every other. To the same taste belong the singular arrangement of the capitals, and the form of the signet itself, an octagonal Sard. The Dove is amongst the devices recommended to his flock by Clemens. From the extreme rarity of Byzantine engraved gems this intaglio possesses considerable interest. (Communicated by J. E. Rolls, Esq.)

4. Bronze Medal, or rather disk, engraved in the coarsest manner. *Obv.*—A female figure standing in the attitude of adoration, the object of which is expressed by the inscription—ORTVS SALVAT, "the Rising of the Saviour," *i. e.* of Mithras. Around runs the name of the person defended by this talisman, viz. "Aurelius Furellius Tatianus."[1] *Rev.*—The so frequent

[1] We can hardly assign this rude charm to the famous Tatian the Syrian (under M. Aurelius), the first apostle of Teetotalism, being the founder of the Hydroparastatæ, or "Friends of Water," so called from

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type of the Sun-Lion passant over a corpse, but the legend is inexplicable, though the letters are plain enough. It commences with IAΩ, followed by AVEKVRMENAKE, which may perhaps imply—"Hail Iao Kurmenacus!" Some novel appellation of the Solar god; perhaps Gallic in origin. Figures and letters are all cut into the metal with one chisel, making strokes of equal width. Its two sides divide between them the design, which appears united in Pl. II. 1 and Pl. VII. 1, where the deity is similarly addressed as Iao, but with different titles. This medal doubtless had accompanied the interment of some individual initiated into the Mithraic mysteries; and is certainly the most curious relic of that faith that has come under my notice.

5. Masons' Marks, inserted for the sake of comparison with the analogous symbols seen on our gems. Compare Pl. VIII. 1 and Pl. X. 2. Those in the first three lines are all to be seen on the ashlar of the drawing-room (interior), Raglan Castle, an Elizabethan building; the four last are examples of those still in use amongst regular masons. The Archæologia for 1845 contains an excellent paper, by Pat. Chalmers, on the Masons' Marks existing in Scotland, illustrated by a plate of the numerous examples to be found upon the mediæval buildings of Brechin, N. B.; and also of the modern ones affixed to the Masons' signatures in St. Ninian's Roll, coming down to the year 1814. Of the former many coincide with those here figured. The volume for 1844 contains another essay on the same subject by G. Godwin, illustrated by five plates presenting a large collection of these Marks, copied from various ancient buildings in England (Gloucester, Tewkesbury, &c.), France, and Germany (Cologne). The Annales Archéologiques (1844-5) also give a copious list of such "Signes Lapidaires," taken from various Gothic buildings throughout France. Ouseley (Travels, Pl. 82) gives several, in which the relationship to the European Gothic Marks is most apparent, found by him on the stones of the old palace (a Mahommedan building) at Saaditalat, near Ispahan (Pl. XIII. I.).

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their interdicting the use of wine even in the Eucharist, a heresy, it need hardly be added, most especially obnoxious to the orthodox divines.

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BAPHOMETIC TABLET: HONE STONE

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The most frequent of all such Marks, that known as Solomon's Seal, is still to the Brahmin replete with mystic allusions in its *Five Points*, because Brahma and Siva have each *five* heads. Its apparent connexion with the Delphic Oracle has been already alluded to (p. 191); as if to establish this surmise, it is used for a mint-mark in front of *Apollo's* head on a denarius of the Family Vibia. Together with the Candlestick of the Tabernacle, it is cut on the tombstone, bearing a trilingual epitaph (Hebrew, Greek, Latin) of the Jewess *Mellelosa*, lately discovered at Tortosa, which dates from the Gothic kingdom of Spain; the end of the sixth century. Figured in the Rev. Archéologique for 1860, p. 345. The Candlestick appears in numerous other examples even under the Lower Empire, as the distinguishing mark of a Jewish gravestone.

Plate XII.

Tablet, figured of the actual size, neatly cut in compact slate or hone stone. The centre is filled with symbols arranged in vertical columns, which at first sight resemble Egyptian hieroglyphics, but which on examination prove of a totally different character. This inscribed tablet has for supporters, on the left (heraldically speaking) a Seraph with folded wings; on the right, a Man seated at a strangely shaped table, which he seems to support upon his knees. He *may* be intended for a Templar, since his close-fitting garment much resembles a mail-shirt, as does his head-dress the iron skull-cap worn by that Order. This bas-relief has indubitably a deep and cabalistic meaning, but whether it goes back to the Templars' epoch, or merely formed part of the paraphernalia of some alchemist or Rosicrucian at a much later date, it is totally beyond my power to decide; though the material, so much employed by the Germans for small bas-reliefs in the fifteenth century, and the peculiar neatness of the execution, rather incline me towards the latter explanation. Nothing can be discovered as to whence it came; it was bought from a dealer by Mr. Litchfield, Cambridge.

Amongst the devices on this tablet some much resemble, and probably are, the distorted Cufic letters occasionally employed by

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the French mediæval artists in their decorations of friezes and borders of MSS., without any reference to their actual sense, of which the sculptor or illuminator was totally ignorant. There is a most instructive article by Longperier, in the Rev. Archéol. (1845),—"Sur l'emploi des caractères Arabes dans l'ornamentation par les peuples Chrétiens dans l'Occident," giving numerous examples, of which the most important are :—

1. A large stained-glass window in the church of St. Julien at Mans, in the borders of which the letters forming the words "Praise be to God!" are frequently repeated.

2. A long frieze of Cufic letters around the portal of Notre Dame de Puy.

3. St. Peter, on the door of a Limoges enamelled chasse, in the style of the thirteenth century; Cufic letters in the field and in the border beneath.

4. This contains many characters greatly resembling those of our tablet: and is the frieze enclosing the figure of a man, set in the gable-end of a house facing the Cathedral, Bourges. Of these some are given in Plate XIII., series H.

The "Cup of Charlemagne," long preserved in the Abbaye de la Madeleine, Châteaudun, as that emperor's own donation (now in the Chartres Museum), proves to be an Egyptian *Hanap*, dating from the close of the twelfth century, and most probably brought back by one of St. Louis' crusaders. The circumference is filled with a beautifully cut inscription, the letters having their sides enamelled in red, and their deepest parts gilt.

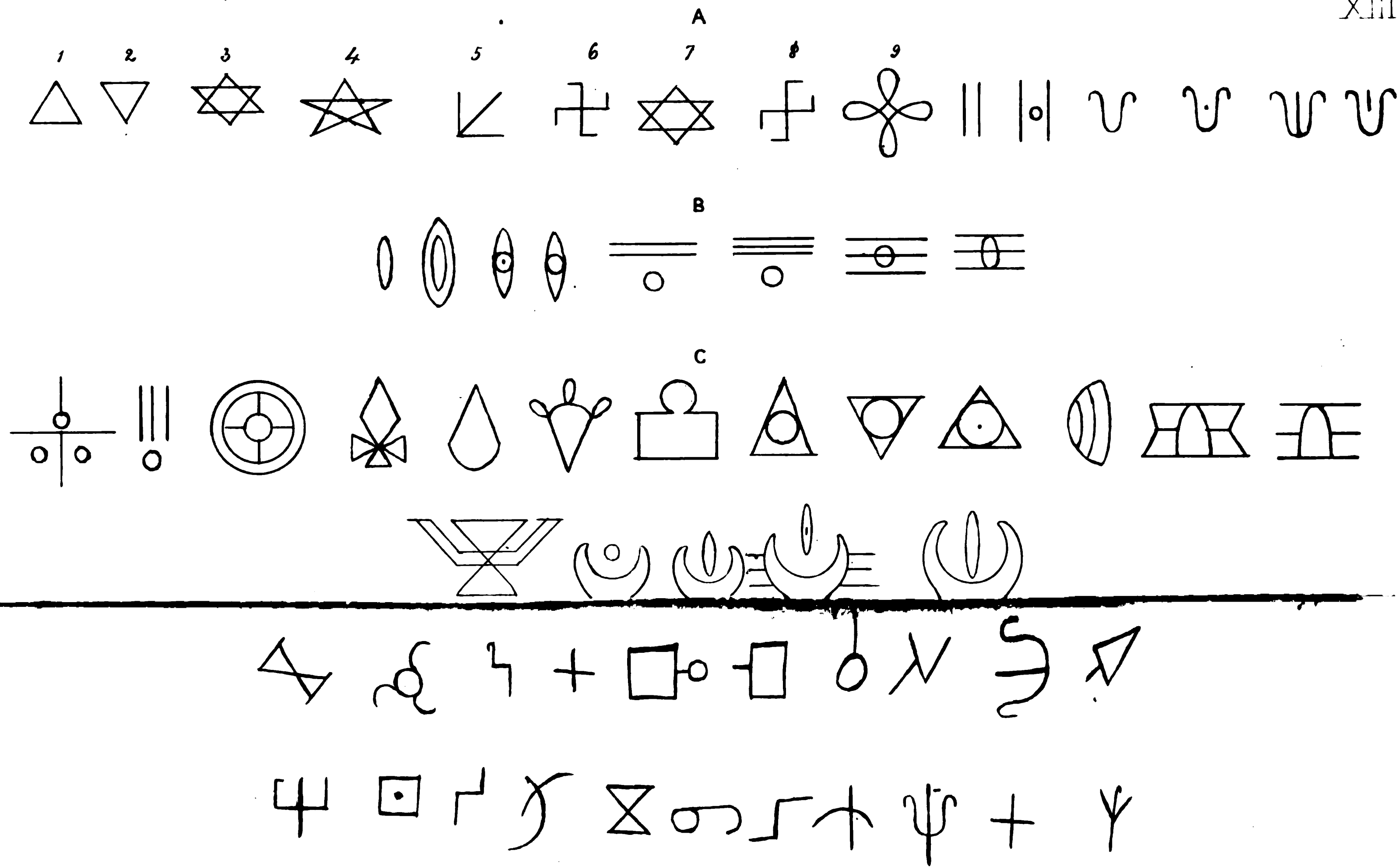
Again, amongst the symbols[1] in our tablet we seem to recognise the Pythagorean Numerals, thus figured in a most ancient MS. of Boethius' Geometry, composed in the sixth century. See Plate XIII. G. The Pythagorean Moderatus, quoted by Porphyry (Vit. Pythag.), states that the numerals of Pythagoras were hieroglyphical symbols, by means whereof he explained ideas concerning the nature of things. That these symbols were *ten* in number appears from Aristotle (Met. vii. 7), that "some

[1] The figure of a Crucible is frequently repeated; the square object with a handle may also be the primitive horn-book.

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XIII



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philosophers hold that Ideas and Numbers are of the same nature, and amount to Ten in all."

Of these Numerals some of the forms occasionally occur in the Gnostic legends, whilst others are as decidedly characters taken from the various ancient alphabets themselves, apparently modifications of the Egyptian Demotic, of which examples are adduced in the following plate.

PLATE XIII.

A. Hindoo Symbols and Sectarian Marks, or *Yantras* (taken from Moor's Hindoo Pantheon. Plate II.).

1. Type of Mahadeva, or Siva, Fire personified.
2. Type of Vishnu, or Water.
3. *Sherkun*, union of the two deities.
4. With five points, emblem of Siva and Brahma; this is the famous Solomon's Seal. The equilateral triangle, *Trikun*, expresses Triune coequality. A Point, *Puru*, the Deity, self-existing. A circle, Brahma, or Eternity. The triangle within a circle, Trinity in Unity; the circle within the triangle, Unity in Trinity.

The worshippers of a *Sacti*, or Female Principle, mark their sacred jar with the symbol (5); those of Vishnu with (6); those of Siva with (3); emblem of the union of Siva and Durga.

Amongst the signatures of the ancient Jaina kings (Buddhists) occur (8) and (9), also the identical "Meander" seen on Greek coins. The six following are Caste-Marks, put daily by the Hindoos on their foreheads with cow-dung ashes, powder of various coloured earths, and sandal-wood, producing a great variety by the employment of different colours; these mark the votaries of Vishnu.

B. These denote the followers, Saivas and Sactas, of Siva and his wife Parvati. The most expressive symbol of passive nature is distinctly enough expressed in their general form;[1] these being

[1] And which on that account Sesostris, says Herodotus, sculptured upon the tablets commemorating the conquest of such nations as had submitted to him without resistance. A similar mark appears on the forehead of the colossal Athor, figured by Montfaucon as an Isis (pl. 113).

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the deities presiding over change, propagation, or transformation, called by the vulgar Death.

C. Other Caste-Marks, denoting minute differences in the sects bearing them, not distinctly set forth by Moor; they are repeated here, inasmuch as they reckon in their number many of our mediæval signs.

D. Characters of the old Slavic alphabet, *Glalgol*, used previously to the invention of Cyril's in the ninth century; and which, considering the affinity of that language to Sanscrit, may very well have had an Indian origin. Some of these characters are certainly identical with those on Plate VIII., No. 1.[1]

E. De Saulcy (Rev. Arch., 1845) gives a very ancient African alphabet (not of Punic origin) used in the famous bilingual inscription of Thugga. With this he compares the modern Berber alphabet, written out for him by Abd el Kader, and shows it to be evidently a corruption of the ancient forms. This ancient alphabet offers a striking analogy to the Egyptian Demotic, its probable parent. Many of its forms may be recognised on our gems, a fact easily explained by the common origin of both.

F. The Palmyrene inscriptions in the Louvre contain, amongst others, the characters here copied, all of which occur in Gnostic formulæ. This is a primitive Syriac alphabet, of an origin totally different from either Punic or Pehlevi. That such a distinct character existed appears from what Epiphanius records (Hær. lxvi.) that "Manes divided his work into 22 books, the number of the letters in the Syriac alphabet. For most of the Persians use the Syriac characters as well as the Persian,[2] just

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[1] The present Sanscrit alphabet, as it appears in its primitive simplicity (as yet uncorrupted by the flourishes of Brahminical calligraphists) in the rock-cut edicts of King Asoka, about B.C. 300, consists unmistakeably of the sixteen letters that composed the original Greek alphabet, but all placed in an inverted position. Prinsep hereupon builds a most ingenious theory that these characters came from India into Greece with the emigrations of the Aryan race; but the converse may be nearer the truth, and Asoka's scribes, like the Greeks themselves, have learnt the use of phonetic characters from the Phœnician traders, whose visits to India had commenced long before the opening of authentic history.

[2] This remark applies equally to the earliest ages, for many Baby-

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as *many nations*[1] with us, though they have a national alphabet of their own, yet employ the Greek. Others forsooth pride themselves upon using the most recondite dialect, viz. that current at Palmyra, both the dialect itself and its letters, and these are 22 in number." In this affectation of the learned Persians, a full reason presents itself for the appearance of Palmyrene characters in formulæ composed and sold by the Magi and their disciples amongst the Asiatic Greeks.

G. These Pythagorean numerals, of unknown antiquity, preserved by the famous Boethius, the "last of the Romans," are undoubtedly the origin of our so-called Arabic numerals, as will appear on reversing those standing for 1, 2, 5, 7, 8, 9, 0. Their forms look like modifications of the Palmyrene alphabet.

H. Specimens of the Cufic letters forming the border of the bas-relief, Bourges, above described.

I. Regular Masons' Marks, copied by Ouseley from the ashlar of the old palace of Saaditalat, near Ispahan, in the belief that they were the letters of an ancient, unknown language.

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lonian cylinders have their legends in a Semitic character, used in preference to the more complicated, national, cuneiform, doubtless a scanty alphabet, for its successor and offspring the Pehlevi had only 13 letters.

[1] A curious fact this; the usual belief being, that by this time, A.D. 400, all the old alphabets had been superseded by the Greek or Latin within the limits of the Roman empire.

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DESCRIPTION OF THE WOODCUTS.

These woodcuts (drawn to double the actual size) include all the most interesting variations in the representation of the established type for the Abraxas Pantheos that have come under my notice. This fanciful creation of Basilides, though ever the same in essentials, never is to be found exactly identical in form on any two monuments, but infinitely and markedly diversified by some change in its gesture, attitude, attributes, and by the ever varied arrangement of the titles and invocations addressed to the Idea therein presented to the eye. Another remarkable point deserves notice here: this Pantheos invariably occupies the field *alone*, representing as it does the supreme Godhead; and thus again manifesting itself to be the offspring of a monotheistic philosophy, to which it would have been an absurdity, not to say impiety, to associate their type of the One and the Whole with a companion of the same nature.

The seven woodcuts of gems formerly in the Praun cabinet, originally engraved for my 'Antique Gems,' have been kindly lent for this book by Mr. Murray.

Title-page.—Iao, with the jackal-head of Anubis, and therefore to be regarded here as assuming the office of the latter, the conducting departed souls to the judgment seat. This image, in such an acceptation, was adopted to typify their Christos, by some amongst the Egyptian Gnostics; a fact explaining Tertullian's allusion (p. 91), and the votive picture of Alexamenos. But divines, with that ignorance of antiquity which is both "the mother" and the safest nurse of their "devotion," go on citing the latter with its inscription as the mere scoff of his pagan fellows, in the sense "This is the god the fool Alexamenos worships." The trite Pompeian tablet "Vatiam ædilem orat scriba Issus," not to mention innumerable others, might have taught them that the expressing one's respect in the third person was the established mode of placing oneself under the patronage of either a divine or a mortal superior.

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1. This beautiful Apollo's bust, a work of the best times, is introduced here, in order to exemplify what is said (p. 85) of the Gnostic custom of borrowing and adapting to their own dogmas whatever seemed analogous in ancient iconology. Behind the head is neatly inserted **ΒΑΙ**, "a prize," written in the vertical manner of hieroglyphic legends: a more barbarous hand has subsequently supplied in front **CЄOY**, probably intended for **ΘЄOY**: for the Arabs yet substitute the *s* for the *th* in their pronunciation.

This intaglio, with its mysterious accompaniment, reminds one of the Pythian Apollo set in the ring of Eucrates, who, he declared, often uttered a voice and warned him by his oracles. Sard. (Author's Collection.)

2. Phœbus erect in his quadriga, holding in one hand the terrestrial globe, the other raised in the gesture of command. Under this ancient type, either Mithras, or the "Sun of Righteousness," is indubitably understood (see p. 49), as appears from the invocation above him, **ΑΒΛΑΝΑΘΑΝΑΒΛΑ**, "Thou art our Father!" to which the Hellenic sun-god had no claim according to the ancient system of mythology. This address, derived from the Syriac *Ab*, Father; *lanu*, to us; *atha*, thou art; is in most cases written with some variation, by omitting or repeating one of its component syllables. In the exergue ΤΥΦΕΥΙ, a frequent title of Mithras. The work of the intaglio, stiff and somewhat barbarous, closely agrees with that of the similar type on a coin of Probus, to whose days this remarkable stone may safely be referred. A large loadstone, but slightly magnified in the cut. Reverse: Diana, or Luna, holding by the horns and guiding the bull, emblem of the Earth. Luna's car is properly drawn by a pair of silver bulls: an attribute translated from the silver antelopes harnessed to the wain of her prototype, the Hindoo *Chandra*. (Mr. Eastwood.)

3. The Abraxas god, invested with all the attributes of Phœbus: a unique type, described at p. 86. Green jasper.

4. Abraxas, here invoked as **CЄMЄSЄIΛΑΜ**, "The Eternal

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Sun:" a good engraving, and intended for a signet, as the reversing of the letters on the stone proves. Reverse: the singular title **AΛMAM** (Our Food?) **ABPACAZ**: implying that he is the spiritual food of the believer. Black loadstone. (Author's Collection.)

5. The most spirited representation of this type that has ever come in my way: the life in the god's gesture, and in the vibration of his serpent supporters, exhibits much of the ancient taste not as yet extinct. From the similarity in style to certain reverses of Sept. Severus, this intaglio may be referred to his epoch, just before Roman art began its rapid decline. Reverse: **IAω CABAω**, "Iao, glory unto thee!" engraved in a large, elegant letter. Green jasper. (Author's Collection.)

6. A design singularly rich in mystic adjuncts; having letters somewhat resembling the Punic engraved upon the interior of the god's shield, in the field at his side, and below the serpents: in the last set is conspicuous the Delphic **E**. A novel appellation is here introduced, **HMAMOP**: evidently cognate in meaning to the **AΛMAM** on No. 4. Reverse: **IH** in large letters, either standing for the holy name *Jeh*, or, as mere numerals, for 18. Around the sloping edge, partly defective, runs the continuous inscription, **IXΘЄΘωHIA IAω IAAΛωNωω**, in which the names *Iao* and *Alon*, a Hebrew appellation of the Deity (Martial's *Anchialus*), occur. In its opening one cannot help fancying an intended allusion to the name and titles of Jesus Christ. Green jasper, unusually well engraved. (Author's Collection.)

7. Abraxas, bearing a kite-shaped (Sicilian) shield, instead of the customary circular clypeus. This engraving is well drawn and carefully done, and may safely be assigned to the very period in which Basilides himself flourished. Green jasper. Praun.

8. The hawk-headed Phre, or sun-god, with the seven vowels above, holding forth a round shield, emblazoned with the Egyptian symbol for the world (see p. 105), and his title, perhaps

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to be read **AAMAM** as in No. 4, or **HMAMOPO** as in No. 6. Well engraved in green jasper. Praun.

9. Horus seated upon the lotus, from the root of which spring two wheat-ears. The legend reads **CEMEC** (the last two letters in monogram) **EIAAM**, "the Eternal Sun." This epithet and the invocation "Thou art our Father," being apparently the established style for this boy-god (originally the sun, yet feeble in the spring quarter), makes it more than probable that their Christos was implied under its shelter by the syncretists of Alexandria; for the latter address would be altogether inappropriate to so infantine a deity, regarded in his primary acceptation. A really good intaglio in black jasper. (Author's Collection.)

10. Serapis: a bust between two stars, emblems of the Dioscuri, the "fratres Helenæ, lucida sidera" of most benign influence, supported upon the wings of a gryphon *seiant.* This animal, the peculiar attribute in olden times of Phœbus, shows that Serapis is here regarded as the solar god (see p. 65). Drawn to the actual size: engraved upon an iron ring, in Mr. Waterton's Collection, to whom my best thanks are due for the loan of the cut of this valuable type, and also of the next.

11. Serapis: a bust in full relief, artistically cut out of bronze, and forming the head of a ring, all in one piece. This unique example explains Pliny's "imaginem principis *ex auro*," and therefore in relief, not *incised* in the gold, "*in auro*," which Claudius allowed as a badge of distinction to those admissible at court. The execution of this miniature bust, though in so base a material, is masterly beyond all description.

12. A very fine example of the Agathodæmon talisman (see p. 74), who proclaims in the legend "I am the Good Spirit, the Eternal Sun." He stands upon the circular cista, whence his representative used to emerge at the Ophite Eucharist. Calcedony with dark shades. Praun.

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13. The neophyte blindfolded, and his hands tied behind his back (the established type for the signet of the Egyptian priesthood), under a column supporting a gryphon, that special emblem of the sun (see p. 61). The reverse offers a figure too rudely engraved for its meaning even to be conjectured, and is inscribed with the names of *Nicandra* and *Sosandra:* looking to the actual signification of these female names, "Win-husband" and "Keep-husband," one may presume this stone designed for a love-charm. Green jasper. Praun.

14. Hermes, guide of departed souls,

> "superis deorum
> Gratus et imis,"

assisting a ghost to emerge from the earth through the virtue of his caduceus, which he holds in a significant manner before its eyes (see p. 90). In the field C. A. D., initials of some Roman's three names, have been added by a later and coarser hand. Doubtless the owner pleased himself mightily with the rebus that the god's attribute formed upon his own initials: the Romans of republican times being, as the family denarii copiously witness, so partial to similar plays upon words. The intaglio is in the hard, carefully finished, archaic Greek manner, upon a fine banded agate. (Author's Collection, from the Praun.)

15. The Hermes of the "Golden Seven," described at p. 108. A rude engraving on sard. (Praun, now in the Author's Collection.)

16. A complete assemblage of Mithraic symbols, nearly coinciding with Chiflet's described in the text (p. 54). The sacred table, with the consecrated bread and the chalice, are conspicuous in the exergue. Rudely engraved in green jasper. Praun.

17. The Isiac Vase, filled with the gifts of that deity, and marked with a symbol similar in nature to that still painted by

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the Hindoo worshippers of Sacti upon their sacrificial jars (see p. 176). Red jasper. Praun.

18. This curious sard, selected by me out of a lot of Sassanian and Cufic stones lately brought from the East, adds another to the list of the rare memorials of the early Persian Nestorians, to which attention was first called by Chabouillet (see p. 143). It evidently represents the Salutation; Mary and Elizabeth joining hands: the design in the quaint, stiff manner of the Sassanian school. Each figure is precisely identical; each wears a fillet, and exhibits the long floating ribbon, and thickly plaited silk gowns, the peculiar costume of the royal ladies in the harems of the Sapors and the Varahrans of the age. In the field between them is the cross-tipped sceptre.

19. The singular Christian intaglio described at p. 142. Red jasper, selected, it would seem, for the sake of its analogy in colour to the subject. (Author's Collection.)

All the following cuts are drawn from the originals in my own possession, and are introduced here to illustrate certain points treated upon in the foregoing pages.

20. Belus attired in a long Babylonian garment, "of needle-work of divers colours" (expressed by the numerous squares composing it), seated on his throne, holds forth to his adorer the sign of life, later by simple inversion the "mound" (*mundus*) of royalty. Above him floats the most ancient emblem of the Godhead, the "winged sun" of the Hebrew prophet (see pp. 49, 72). This intaglio is a masterpiece of Assyrian art; equal to, and identical in its execution with that of the finest Etruscan scarabs. Cylinder in loadstone.

21. Locust mounted upon a goat. To remember that the statue of Aphrodite *Pandemos* by Scopas at Elis was similarly enthroned, leaves no doubt as to the true intention of this talisman (see p. 212). Sard.

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22. The Evil Eye surrounded by antidotes against its influence for every day in the week, in the attribute of the deity presiding over each, viz., the lion for dies Solis, the stag for d. Lunæ, the scorpion for d. Martis, the dog for d. Mercurii, &c. (p. 115). Sard.

23. Serapis as the solar god, and assuming the proper emblem of Esculapius (see p. 225). Sard of the deepest blood red.

24. The winged foot of the angel of death extinguishing life (see p. 159). Jacinth.

25. Fate, Homer's Αἶσα; one of the rarest types to be met with in ancient art. In Stosch's vast collection Winckelmann was unable to find a single indubitable example. The goddess has the necklace, armlets, and the peculiar disk-formed ear-drops so frequent in Etruscan jewelry, adjuncts which, besides the peculiar archaic style, indicate the period of this interesting intaglio. Brown agate with transverse shades.

26. The Delphic E (see p. 198) the true original of that puzzling device the Seleucidan *anchor* (p. 136). Cameo in flat relief.

27. The Mithraic Bull couchant (see p. 57). It is a very significant fact that on all these Persian gems the sacred bull is invariably of the Brahminee breed, whilst that, the object of the chase, is the ordinary European beast. Legend, in Pehlevi of the second period, *Bāt Khsru*, "The spirit of Chosroes." The legend round this type usually contains the name of the reigning monarch; another in my possession reads *Rāst Shahpuhri*, "Sapor the Just." Spinel.

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ADDENDA.

BRACHMANS. P. 25.

That the sect celebrated by the ancients under this appellation were rather Buddhists than Brahmins (their inveterate opponents), appears from one circumstance connected with their institutions alluded to by Strabo (Book XV.). He speaks of their devoting thirty years to the study of divinity, living in a community (or monastery, *vihar*) sequestered from the world, in the woods surrounding their respective cities, and totally abstaining from animal food and sexual intercourse. Now, with the Brahmins, to leave offspring behind them is a most sacred duty, upon the fulfilment of which even their admission into heaven depends. Whether the Buddhists be the representatives of the primal religion of India, or only the pre-Protestants of the more ancient Brahminical church, it is the natural logic of all dissidents from an established creed to ridicule and to pronounce damnable the favourite tenets of their adversaries. Witness Martin Luther, with his invectives against vows of virginity, and his motto,

> "Wer liebt nicht Weib, Wein, und Gesang,
> Der lebt ein Narr sein lebenslang."

Similarly we find the Essenes running counter to the ancient notions of their race on the same particular, and spontaneously embracing what the Mosaic law had denounced as the greatest of curses, the leaving no posterity behind to keep up their name in Israel.

To exemplify the severe discipline of his Brachmans, Strabo states that the mere act of blowing the nose, or spitting, caused

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the offender to be for that day excluded, as *incontinent*, from the society of his fellow recluses. Similarly Josephus particularises, amongst other Essenian rules, the obligation of abstaining from all natural evacuations upon the Sabbath day. But even their rigour is surpassed, and in our days, by a certain sect of Hindoo *Yogis*, who profess to have completely emancipated themselves from all such defiling necessities of nature. This they effect by living entirely on milk, which, after retaining a short time in the stomach, they throw up by swallowing a ball fastened to a string, and maintain the animal expenditure solely through the nutriment imbibed by the system during the continuance of the liquid in the stomach, which consequently leaves no residuum to descend into the bowels. A practice this, a most complete *reductio ad absurdum* of the doctrine of meritorious continence, and exhibiting, on the ludicrous side, the mischievous consequences of being too logical in matters of religion.

GNOSTIC HATRED OF JUDAISM. P. 28.

In this degradation of the names, the most sacred in the Jewish theology, is unmistakeably to be recognised the very teaching of those "dreamers" condemned by Jude (i. 8) for despising "Dominion," and speaking evil of "Dignities." For "Dominion" is the "Empire" in the Sephiroth (see p. 12), to which the Kabala had assigned the title of *Adonai*. Now, we here find the Ophites making *Adonai* the third son of Ildabaoth, a malignant genius, and, like his brethren, the constant adversary of the Christ. The "Dignities" are the other personages of the Sephiroth, similarly degraded in the new theogony. Jude clearly shows what he had in view, by contrasting in the next verse the audacity of these "blasphemers" (the word he uses) with the respect displayed by Michael towards his opponent on account of his angelic character, though fallen from his high estate. By a most singular coincidence (much too close to be merely accidental) Jude's censure, nay, his very expressions, are repeated by Peter in his Second Epistle (ii. 10). If either of these epistles were really written by the Apostles whose names they bear, these passages indicate the very early existence

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of this particular school of Gnosticism, theorising thus perhaps before the preaching of Christianity.

Εφεσια Γραμματα. P. 74.

Amongst the interminable invocations covering some of these talismans, lie hidden, we may suspect, those potent spells composed by Solomon himself: repeating which, and at the same time applying to the sufferers' noses his ring (under whose gem was placed the herb prescribed by the same oracle of all wisdom), the Jew Eleazar drew out through their nostrils the devils that possessed many, in the presence of Vespasian, his tribunes and chief officers. The sapient Josephus adds, that to prove the reality of the exit of the demoniacal usurper, the exorcist commanded him in his flight to overturn a foot-bath filled with water, standing at some distance; which was forthwith done, to the consternation and conviction of all the heathen spectators.

The "Ephesian Spell," so mighty in driving out devils, will be found at p. 94.

There can be no doubt that such spells were efficacious for their purpose. Demoniacal possession was nothing more than epilepsy (or "possession," a name derived from the same belief); for Galen, after rationally discussing the medical causes of that malady, adds, that the vulgar universally attributed it to the influence of evil spirits. Now, as our experience of Mesmerism shows (so far as there is any reality in that pet science of quacks and charlatans) the most wonderful effects can be produced upon persons labouring under nervous derangement by words of command authoritatively uttered: how much more powerful if pronounced in an unknown tongue, by a person of *imposing* presence, and over patients already filled with faith in his ability to relieve them! Hence the casting out devils was the grand staple of their trade with all the thaumaturgists, both old and new, in the ages with which we are now dealing. That the cure should be permanent was a thing perfectly immaterial; it being quite enough for the purpose of the exorcist that the manifestation of his superhuman power should have succeeded

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for the moment, to the edification of the awestruck crowd of assembled believers, and to the confusion of the few rationalistic doubters amongst their number.

Such spells also gave power over demons ranging unconfined in a fleshly prison. Eucrates, in Lucian's amusing Philopseudes, boasts that he is so accustomed to meet thousands of demons ranging about, that at last he has come not to notice them at all, more especially since the Arabian had given him "the ring forged out of the nails of a cross, and taught him the charm made up of *many names*." The latter expression is valuable for our researches; it proves that the legends in an unknown tongue consist of strings of titles of the power invoked, and also that some of them at least are couched in Arabic.[1]

Philostratus does not state whether the virtue of the seven rings (one for each day of the week), presented to Apollonius by the Brachman Iarchas, lay in their gems or their sigils: but wondrous was its potency, for by wearing them he preserved not merely his bodily strength, but even his personal beauty, beyond his hundredth year.

CABALISTIC LEGENDS. P. 134.

There is a passage in Dante (Paradiso, XVIII.) replete with the profoundest symbolism, which of course the Freemasons claim for their own; and that with all possible security, for the very nature of their assumption exempts them from the obligation of publishing an interpretation of the mystery therein cloaked from the view of the profane. Dante describes how

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[1] Apollonius Tyaneus enjoyed the credit in the second century of having manufactured the most potent τελεσματα; Justin Martyr firmly believed in them, for he asks (Quæst. xxiv.) "How is it that the talismans of Apollonius have power in certain members of creation, for they prevent, *as we see*, the fury of the waves, and the violence of the winds, and the attacks of mice (flies) and wild beasts; and, whilst our Lord's miracles are preserved by tradition alone, those of Apollonius are most numerous, and actually manifested in present facts, so as to lead astray all beholders?" He answers this query by referring their efficacy to the deep knowledge of this thaumaturgus in the sympathies and repugnancies of Nature. These talismans seem to have been formulæ or spells in words—to judge from the expressions of Justin—not tangible objects.

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the *Five* times *Seven* letters making up the *Five* words "Diligite justitiam qui judicatis terram," came forth in the star Jupiter, and the beatified spirits of just princes hovered over the M, assuming in their arrangement the outline of an eagle.[1] Certainly the importance given to the number Five in this allegory savours much of the Gnostic terminology, and reminds one of the thirty letters in the quadri-syllabic name revealed to Marcus (p. 39). In the M so prominently honoured by the just, Von Hammer, had he noticed this passage, would infallibly have discovered his *Mete* of the Templars.

But the hidden sense of the Ghibelline poet was, it may be safely presumed, more political than religious. This seems evident from the conspicuous part played in the apparition by the *eagle;* either that of the German emperor, whose aid Italia through his verse perpetually invokes, or else the cognizance of his patron at Ravenna, who

"In sulla scala porta il Santo Uccello."

As for the M, which must have appeared in its Lombardic form, a conjecture may be hazarded that it here stands for the very similar astronomical symbol (ala Virginis) for Astræa, and only typifies Justice in the abstract, thus embodying in itself the spirit of the entire sentence.

THE CHRISMA. P. 135.

In the later Byzantine inscriptions the monogram of Christ is expressed by the P crossed by a short bar between A and $\bar{O}$, the last the then current form of the Ω. The vowels also are frequently transposed. This peculiarly arranged monogram is largely employed in the ornamentation of Italian Gothic, notably in church pavements, as in Milan Cathedral; where, being read as the Latin OPA, it is misinterpreted as referring

[1] He has before (Canto VI.) spoken of "the awe that masters him" before the B and the ICE; evidently initials of some mighty pass-word, although his commentators most prosaically interpret them as the mere diminutive of Beatrice.

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to the *Operai* or "Board of Works" of the particular city, and inserted to distinguish what had been executed under their superintendence.

AGATHODÆMON TALISMANS.

The finest example of the class known to me (recently communicated by the kindness of the owner) is a most beautiful convex plasma, presenting Chnuphis erect above his invariable accompaniment, and offering on the reverse, most elegantly inscribed, the novel legend, **OCOP-MEPΦ-ΦEPΓAMAPA-ΦPIΔYPIC-XNOYΦIC-NABIC-KICNYΘ.** (Bosanquet Collection).

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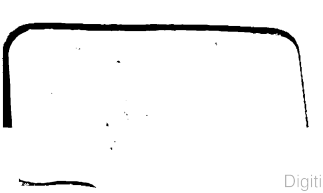
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